



ILLINOIS

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

PRODUCTION NOTE

University of Illinois at
Urbana-Champaign Library
Large-scale Digitization Project, 2007.

LIBRARY TRENDS

SUMMER 2002

VOLUME 51, No. 1, 1-139

Services to the Labor Community

Deborah Joseph Schmidle

Issue Editor

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF
LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

LIBRARY TRENDS

Library Trends, a quarterly thematic journal, focuses on current trends in all areas of library practice. Each issue addresses a single theme in depth, exploring topics of interest primarily to practicing librarians and information scientists and secondarily to educators and students.

Editor: F. W. LANCASTER

Publications Committee: BETSY HEARNE, ALLEN RENEAR, MARLO WELSHONS

Library Trends is published four times annually—in summer, fall, winter, and spring—by the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, 501 E. Daniel Street, Champaign, IL 61820-6211.

Subscriptions: Institutional rate is \$94 per volume (plus \$7 for overseas subscribers). Subscriptions for an individual are \$66 (plus \$7 for overseas subscribers). Registered students may subscribe for \$28 (plus \$7 for overseas subscribers). Individual issues are \$25.00 (shipping included); back issues other than those from the present year are \$10 (plus shipping). Claims for missing numbers should be made within six months following the date of publication. All foreign subscriptions and orders must be accompanied by payment.

Address orders to: University of Illinois Press, Journals Department, 1325 S. Oak Street, Champaign, IL 61820. For out-of-print issues, contact ProQuest Information and Learning, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346. **Postmaster:** Send change of address to University of Illinois Press, 1325 S. Oak Street, Champaign, IL 61820-6903.

Copyright © 2002 by the Board of Trustees of The University of Illinois.

All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A. ISSN 0024-2594.

Postage paid at Champaign, Illinois.

Authorization to photocopy items beyond the number and frequency permitted by Sections 107 and 108 of the U.S. Copyright Law is granted by the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois, provided that copies are for internal or personal use, or for the personal or internal use of specific clients and provided that the copier pay a fee of 10 cents per page directly to the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC), 222 Rosewood Dr., Danvers, MA 01923. The CCC code for *Library Trends* is 0024-2594/88 \$0 + .10. To request permission for copies for advertising or promotional purposes, or for creating new works, please contact the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, Publications Office, 501 E. Daniel Street, Champaign, IL 61820-6211.

This journal is abstracted or indexed in *Library and Information Science Abstracts*, *Current Contents*, *Current Index to Journals in Education*, *Information Science Abstracts*, *Library Literature*, *PAIS*, and *Social Sciences Citation Index*.

Procedures for Proposing and Guest Editing an Issue of *Library Trends*

We encourage our readers to submit ideas for future *Library Trends* themes; issue topics are developed through recommendations from members of the Publications Committee and from reader suggestions. We also encourage readers to volunteer to be issue editors or to suggest others who may be willing to be issue editors.

The style and tone of the journal is formal rather than journalistic or popular. *Library Trends* reviews the literature, summarizes current practice and thinking, and evaluates new directions in library practice. Papers must represent original work. Extensive updates of previously published papers are acceptable, but revisions or adaptations of published work are not sought. Although *Library Trends* is not formally peer reviewed, articles are invited for submission and are critically reviewed by both the guest editor and the journal editor.

An issue editor proposes the theme and scope of a new issue, draws up a list of prospective authors and article topics, and provides short annotations of each article's scope or else gives a statement of philosophy guiding the issue's development. Please send your ideas, inquiries, or prospectus to F. W. Lancaster, Editor, GSLIS Publications Office, 501 E. Daniel Street, Champaign, IL 61820-6211.

LIBRARY TRENDS

Summer 2002

51(1) 1-139

Services to the Labor Community

Deborah Joseph Schmidle

Issue Editor

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF
LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

2

Services to the Labor Community

CONTENTS

Introduction <i>Deborah Joseph Schmidle</i>	1
Library Service to Unions: A Historical Overview <i>Elizabeth Ann Hubbard</i>	5
Service to the Labor Community: A Public Library Perspective <i>Ann C. Sparanese</i>	19
A Fifty-Five Year Partnership: ALA and the AFL-CIO <i>Arthur S. Meyers</i>	36
The Information Needs of Local Union Officials <i>Margaret A. Chaplan and Edward J. Hertenstein</i>	50
The Evolution of Research and Information Services at the American Federation of Teachers <i>F. Howard Nelson and Bernadette Bailey</i>	70
Librarians and Working Families: Bridging the Information Divide <i>Gaye Williams</i>	78
Preserving the Historical Record of American Labor: Union-Library Archival Services Partnerships, Recent Trends, and Future Prospects <i>Thomas James Connors</i>	85

Simple Exhibits, Effective Learning: Presenting the United Farm Workers' Experience on the World Wide Web <i>Daniel Golodner</i>	101
Labor on Campus: Academic Library Service to Labor Groups <i>Deborah Joseph Schmidle</i>	115
About the Contributors	137

Introduction

DEBORAH JOSEPH SCHMIDLE

THE HISTORY OF LIBRARY SERVICE to labor unions is a long-standing one. It is thus somewhat surprising that, up to now, this has also been a largely undocumented history.

This issue is the brainchild of a committee with an unusual membership: six librarians and six representatives of organized labor. The American Federation of Labor/Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)/American Library Association (ALA) Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups, which celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 2001, is committed to the current charge to “initiate, develop, and foster ways and means of effecting closer cooperation between the librarian and labor organizations and the large constituency represented by the labor organizations” (*ALA Handbook of Organizations, 2000–2001*, pp. 21–22). The work of the joint committee, discussed in detail in this volume, is but one manifestation of library-labor cooperation. For example, ALA also presents annually the John Sessions Memorial Award, in recognition of outstanding library service to labor unions such as special programming, subject-specific collection development, outreach training, and publications. Two other professional organizations of librarians—the Labor Issues Caucus of the Special Library Association (SLA) and the Committee of Industrial Relations Librarians (CIRL)—also address the provision of library services to organized labor, either on an in-house or outreach basis.

While serving as cochair of the joint committee, and as a reference librarian in Cornell University’s School of Industrial and Labor Relations Library, I noticed that the subject of library services to American labor unions received scant attention. This dearth of discussion is remarkable,

not only because of the long history of library-labor interaction, but also because of the scale (or potential scale) of such interaction. There are over 16 million labor union members in the United States (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2002) and approximately 100 industrial and labor relations programs in universities throughout the United States and Canada.¹

The nine articles in this issue reflect the diversity of the joint committee membership and the collaboration between librarians and labor union members. These articles draw upon the experiences and perspectives of academic, public, and special libraries, as well as labor unions' education and research departments. Authors include librarians, archivists, labor educators, and a professor in labor relations. Contributions include those of current and past joint committee members. The submissions discuss the history of library-labor interaction, as well as the ways in which libraries are currently working with union groups to provide research assistance and to facilitate the use of evolving technologies.

A trio of articles in this issue provides the historical context of the role of libraries providing service to labor groups. The relationship between labor unions and public libraries is an especially strong one, as evidenced in both Elizabeth Ann Hubbard's and Ann Sparanese's articles. Hubbard, senior assistant in the higher education department of the American Federation of Teachers, traces the history and evolution of public library services to labor unions from the mid-nineteenth century to the modern day, while Sparanese, a reference librarian at the Englewood (New Jersey) Public Library and chair of the John Sessions Memorial Award Committee, focuses on unique services and programming provided to unions by public libraries, highlighting some past Sessions Award winners. The AFL-CIO/ALA Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups was initially founded to address the services of labor provided by public libraries. Over the years, the focus of the Joint Committee broadened. Art Meyers, director of the Russell Library (Middletown, Connecticut), and for many years an active participant on the joint committee, acts here as the committee historian, providing an overview of the creation, development, and workings of the joint committee from its earliest days to present.

An evaluation of library services to labor groups should include an assessment of the various needs of this community. Margaret Chaplan (library director) and Edward Hertenstein (assistant professor) at the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, describe the findings of their survey designed to assess the information needs of union officials throughout the Midwest. In addition, Chaplan and Hertenstein discuss the ways in which labor officials set about fulfilling these needs and the impact that library training has on how effectively union members find information.

The information and research services of one particular union is outlined in Howard Nelson and Bernadette Bailey's article describing servic-

es provided at the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). Nelson, senior associate director of Research and Information Services at AFT, and Bailey, a librarian at AFT, examine the changing roles of information services and research in the AFT, describing the effects of technology and financial considerations on these services.

Rounding out the emphasis on the research needs of labor, Gaye Williams, assistant to the president for communication and technology of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) describes the way in which her union utilized the Internet to facilitate communications and the dissemination of information following the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. She also discusses SEIU's network of Web sites, "Locals Online," and offers practical suggestions, from a union point of view, as to the ways in which libraries and labor can work together to oversee the information and technology needs of unionists.

The remaining articles in this issue provide the perspective of academic libraries. The role of documentation and archiving in academic institutions is provided by two articles that describe the ways in which university-based labor archives both preserve and make public an historical record of American labor. Thomas Connors, curator of the National Public Broadcasting Archives at the University of Maryland, describes the Labor Archives Project (LAP). In 1995, LAP brought together ten archivists to examine and discuss the ways in which organizational changes within labor unions have impacted both the record collection and documentation of unions, as well how these changes affected the relationship between these unions and the repositories of their collections. The team's survey methods, findings, and recommendations are discussed.

Dan Golodner, American Federation of Teachers Archivist and Webmaster at the Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs at Wayne State University, describes the use of the Internet as a means of presenting labor history, in large part by revisiting the creation of Wayne State University's online exhibit, "La Causa—A United Farm Workers (UFW) Exhibition." This exhibit focuses on the formation and rise of the UFW; the life of its leader, Cesar Chavez; and various other aspects of the UFW. The theory and practical design elements involved in creating such an exhibit are discussed.

My own article is an outgrowth of nearly five years of experience as Outreach Services Librarian at Catherwood Library, School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University. In that capacity, I headed up the Labor Outreach Program, a curriculum focused exclusively on Internet training programs for labor unions throughout New York State and elsewhere. In addition to describing the creation and implementation of this program, I discuss the findings of my informal e-mail survey of fifty-three libraries and the findings of more in-depth phone interviews with academic librarians providing outreach services to labor unions.

The conclusions of my findings seem to match others in this issue; the long history of library-labor interaction notwithstanding, libraries could do much more to provide services to nontraditional patron groups such as labor unions. It is my hope that the articles in this issue will help further that goal.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This issue would not have been complete without the participation of our labor contributors, Thomas Conners, Gaye Williams, Howard Nelson, and Bernadette Bailey. A very special thanks is due to Elizabeth Ann Hubbard for her tireless efforts in recruiting these authors and securing their submissions.

NOTE

- 1 This figure was the result of information gathered from *Peterson's Graduate Programs in the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences* 35th ed., 2001, and *Peterson's 4 Year Colleges* 31st edition, 2001.

REFERENCES

- ALA Handbook of Organization, 2000-2001*. (2000). Chicago: American Library Association.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2002). Union members summary. Retrieved January 31, 2002 from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.nr0.htm>.

Library Service to Unions: A Historical Overview

ELIZABETH ANN HUBBARD

ABSTRACT

AMERICAN PUBLIC LIBRARIES and labor unions began their institutional development during the nineteenth century as communities developed and prospered across the nation. Both institutions had strong democratic ideals and a firm commitment to free, quality education for all Americans, and so the historical roots of these institutions intertwined. Public libraries strive to serve the special needs of specific populations within their communities by providing the materials and resources they need. In areas of densely populated organized labor communities, special services could include historical and biographical works on the labor movement; literacy materials; and industrial, economic, and political studies. However, according to a national public libraries research study, libraries since the late 1960s have shifted from providing organized labor with special services to treating them as a group of patrons without special needs.

This article briefly reviews the evolution of public libraries, the origins of today's union movement, and the role of the AFL-CIO/ALA Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups. The article further defines a number of misunderstandings and lack of trust between libraries and organized labor. A statement developed by the joint committee is recommended as a guide to future steps for library and organized labor: "There must be continuing effort, inspired by the conviction on both sides that this enterprise can and will benefit both the labor movement and the public library" (*Guide for Developing a Public Library Service to Labor Groups*, 1973, [unpaginated]).

INTRODUCTION

American libraries and labor groups have a recorded history of working in collaboration toward common goals and participating in mutually beneficial activities. Libraries and labor unions in particular have intertwining historical roots. The organized labor movement considers itself a strong advocate for the free public library and has provided a consistent record of support and testimony for library funding critical to providing services and materials to the nation's citizens. Labor's concern and support for the community public library parallels its "ongoing struggle to achieve free, quality public education for all Americans" (Shields, 1979, p. 1).

As communities developed and prospered in the nineteenth century, public libraries were created to advance towns' social, cultural, or economic goals. Public library development was dependent upon either the economic viability of individual communities or upon the existence of interested wealthy individuals. Libraries, then, evolved from private philanthropic initiative, not from public governmental action. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, libraries and communities across the nation benefited from the proliferation of private philanthropy. Private philanthropy predated tax support by many years because it was simple, direct, and dependent only upon the accumulation of wealth by a generous donor (U.S. Bureau of Education, 1876, p. 477). The first tax-supported libraries drew much of their strength from the donations of wealthy men because towns were unable to adequately support the institution without them.

From these beginnings, organized labor envisioned the continuing educational opportunities for all its members and their families through the resources of the public library. Historically, unions have championed support for a strong public education system, have advocated the right of all children to receive a quality education, and have promoted opportunities for continuing education. Labor's commitment to the public library system extends to both individual and institutional needs. Union members collectively have a stake in public libraries as workers, taxpayers, parents, and citizens.

Many types of libraries are available to serve labor union members' needs: Academic libraries at universities with a labor studies center and major public library research facilities may serve local unions, central labor councils, or state labor federations. State libraries, law libraries at public universities, and national libraries such as the National Library of Medicine and the Library of Congress have specialized materials to answer complex requests. Also, labor union libraries can be found in cities housing national or international union headquarters.

In 1926, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) called attention to the need for librarians to assist unions in their educational work, especially in the area of adult education. The AFL recommended that "unions everywhere seek the friendly aid of librarians and that the American Library

Association (ALA) be kept advised of our needs and plans" (Shields, 1979, p. 1). A more formal and direct relationship between labor and libraries was recognized by the AFL recommendation, but it was not until 1945 that the ALA formed the AFL-CIO/ALA Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups, one of the longest-lasting collaborations in ALA's strong partnership history. Meyers (1999) states that the partnership has served both the philosophical aims of libraries and the educational goals of labor (p. 52). But the history of library services to labor groups is not without conflict. The conflict between unionization of library staff and the goals of libraries to serve unionized patrons that was disclosed in a 1949 library study on the social contributions of the institution showed a need to educate library management on the difference between these two areas.

The scope and purpose of this report is to provide a brief historical overview of the evolution of the partnership between libraries and organized labor from their first documented collaborations in the early 1800s through the last decades of the twentieth century. Studies and reports of library service to labor are scarce in library literature, but two major works provide thorough overviews.

One major work was published in 1963, *Library Service to Labor*, a collection of articles compiled by Dorothy Kuhn Oko and Bernard F. Downey. The AFL-CIO/ALA Joint Committee had been in existence for eighteen years when the Oko and Downey book was published, and the book presents articles from various publications during the years 1940 through 1960. According to Humphrey (1963), a contributor to the collection whose original article was published in a 1953 *Newsletter*, there was a "great barrier preventing adequate library-labor cooperation," due to a "lack of knowledge on the one hand of available services and on the other, of actual needs" (p. 37). More than thirty-five years have passed since Humphrey's assessment, and a review of surveys, articles, and reports written since her statement will help determine more recent activities and views of library-labor collaboration.

Another rich resource is Soltow's 1984 overview of public libraries' service to organized labor. It details fifty years of library service to labor and examines factors that have influenced the services offered. Soltow includes the role of the AFL-CIO/ALA Joint Committee on Library Services to Labor Groups and provides suggestions for future directions.

According to Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), productive assessments of services to groups should create mutually acceptable outcomes and actions, reflecting both an assessment of the usefulness of what is being done and of the resources being consumed (p. 11). The expectation for library-labor collaborations is one in which the merger of labor's communicated needs and the library's ability to provide and support specific needs will result in useful and successful outcomes and will strengthen the partnership.

At the start of the new millennium, an analysis of the evolution of library services to labor and a record of perceived successes and failures are

needed to identify the types of services that could provide constructive strategies toward serving today's unions, while pointing toward future mutually beneficial collaborations. This historical review of the relationship between unions and libraries is intended to demonstrate the past connection and to initiate a future one.

THE EMERGENCE OF LIBRARIES AND TRADE UNIONS

The association between trade unions and the public library began as early as 1824 when the workers of Philadelphia, through one of the first central trade councils in America, organized a Mechanics Free Library as an educational center. At the Mechanics Free Library, workers assembled books to help them learn about new work systems in the first Industrial Revolution (Meany, 1960, p. 13). Merchants' and tradesmen's libraries in many cities formed the nuclei for libraries to be used by the general public. To the advantage of both, tax-supported libraries and tradesmen's libraries developed concurrently from 1825 through 1850 (Curti, 1943, p. 364).

Library reports document that the founders of the public library expressed deep concern for workers. But Ditzion (1947), in *Arsenals of a Democratic Culture*, states, "For library interests humanitarianism was too often a tactical approach to the sympathies of persons of influence. It was. . . psychologically sound to appeal to human and social values shared by Americans in all walks of life" (p.109).

The single most important benefactor of public libraries during the nineteenth century was the philanthropist Andrew Carnegie (Jeavons, 1994, p. 19). Between 1881 and 1917 he gave over \$56 million for the construction of 1,681 public library buildings throughout the United States, an unprecedented gift with profound effects. In each recipient community, Carnegie insisted that the communities commit themselves to the library's continued support. Carnegie's first philanthropic gift of a library was given to his birthplace, Dunfermline, Scotland, in 1881. Shortly afterwards, Carnegie wrote a letter to the mayor of Pittsburgh offering funds to build a free public library if the city would accept it and would agree to appropriate \$15,000 a year for its maintenance. Many years passed before Carnegie's gift to Pittsburgh was accepted and the building was completed. In 1895, as preparations were being made for the library dedication, Carnegie stated, "The list and number of tickets are to be published in the newspaper so that the workers may see they are not forgotten. We must carry the working masses with us or the Institution is a failure" (Carnegie to William Frey, 1 July 1895).

However, there was one large group of Pittsburgh citizens who were very vocal in their anger with Carnegie's gift. Trade unions publicly urged the rejection of Carnegie's library. A mass meeting under the authorization of the American Flint Glass Workers' Union was held on the South Side, 10 September 1892, to take action regarding Carnegie's gift. The well-attended meeting resulted from recent strikes at the Carnegie Iron Works. The

chairman of the meeting said that Pittsburgh was not impoverished and the Carnegie Library would be of no use to the workers of the city, especially in the selected location of Schenley Park (Ditzion, 1947, p. 161). He stated that the library would be a constant source of taxation and the people never had a chance to vote on whether they wanted such taxation. Unions accused Carnegie of building libraries and then reducing the wages of workers to pay for them. A union leader cried out that he "would sooner enter a building built with the dirty silver of Judas Iscariot got for betraying Jesus Christ than enter the Carnegie Library" (Ditzion, 1947, p. 161). The meeting closed with workers unanimously adopting the following: "Resolved, that this meeting declares that councils of the city of Pittsburgh shall revoke their previous action in accepting a donation from Andrew Carnegie to build a library for the city, and return the money to the donor" (*Pittsburgh Dispatch*, 1892, p. 3).

Carnegie, in a personal correspondence to Mr. Herbert Spencer dated 5 January 1897, explained why he continued his plans to build a library, hall, and museum for the working masses of Pittsburgh when they had publicly requested City Council reject his gifts: "they knew not what they did, and so rendered only more steadfast, if possible, in my determination to give them precious gifts. Never, have halls, Libraries, Museums and Art Galleries roused the masses of a city to such enthusiasm." (Carnegie to Herbert Spencer, 5 January 1897).

Samuel Gompers, founder of the American Federation of Labor, stated: "Yes, accept his library, organize the workers, secure better conditions and, particularly, reduction in hours of labor, and then the workers will have the chance and leisure in which to read books" (Ditzion, 1947, p. 162).

During the early years of public library growth across the nation, a report from the Boston Public Library in 1898 stated that laborers were a very low percentage of their registered library users—only 702 card holders were identified as laborers out of 72,000 total patrons (Sullivan, 1954, p. 63). Sullivan points out that the level of education in the late 1800s was low and that large numbers of immigrants from many cultures created booming populations in cities such as Boston. The statistics did not allow for the number of laborers who used the library without being registered cardholders.

Two studies that brought fiscal and political issues to the attention of librarians are considered landmark studies and the first significant analyses of libraries in the political process. In the first of these studies, Joeckel (1935) argued that the organizational pattern of libraries and their funding provided the country with inadequate service. In *The Government of the American Public Library*, Joeckel described, analyzed, and evaluated the position of the public library in the structure of government in the United States.

The second of these studies, Garceau (1949), became one of the library field's most cited works of a political nature and included a warning to librarians: "It is the conclusion of our research that it is of paramount im-

portance to librarians, to library service, and to the citizen that public librarians understand and appreciate more clearly the political world of the public library" (p. 239). Service to labor was included in this two-year study. The study encompassed fifty municipal libraries, ten county library systems, and twenty-two state library agencies and was designed to use interdisciplinary methods of research to investigate nine topics including history, budget, and governing authority. The study had two objectives: an appraisal, in sociological, cultural, and human terms, of the extent to which librarians are achieving their objectives and an assessment of the public library's actual and potential contribution to American society. One of the findings had a direct connection to library service to labor:

In a majority of our sample, librarians have not themselves seriously considered direct service to labor unions, though actively searching for direct links to organized groups. One large city library has allowed experiments with service to factories and unions to become confused institutionally and ideologically with the unionization of its own staff; and library board and chief librarian maintain a hands-off coolness to the project. (Garceau, 1949, p. 122)

Sullivan's and Cohen's contributions in *Library Services to Labor* provide a general historical background of the concurrent rise of the labor movement and the recognition by librarians that outreach services to various constituent groups would be mutually beneficial. However, Cohen (1963) states that an examination of certain attitudes toward service to labor reveals that librarians have, for the most part, felt no particular obligation to labor unions and their members (p. 54). Kemsley (1963) reminds us that "it is a correct assumption that very few union leaders and for that matter, few union education directors fully realize the services that are available from their public library" (p. 13). Oko and Downey's publication provides a wide range of topics for library services to labor, including: the needs of labor, how to establish a labor service within the library, collection suggestions, types of materials, union educational programs, publicizing labor services, and case studies of five large public libraries that developed labor services in the 1940s. The publication is useful as a primer for establishing services to labor and for providing the historical context for previous work in this area.

LIBRARY SERVICES FROM A LABOR UNION PERSPECTIVE

Union requests for library service mirror workers' interest in the community, employment issues, personal and family issues, historical materials for reference and information, literacy concerns, referral resources, and reading materials for enjoyment. Central to organized labor requests are materials and books that support ongoing adult education programs for members, standard reference tools and trade union periodicals, indexes and services in the labor field, and general labor literature.

Godfrey (1963) states that labor's first need is for librarians who are interested in their problems (p. 100). Surveying unions about their library needs, Godfrey found that unions desired to hire or train library staff who specialize in economic and trade union materials; to purchase more titles dealing with labor problems from the workers' and union's viewpoint; to collect biographical and historical works on the labor movement, as well as industrial, economic, and political studies; to provide subscriptions to more labor papers and magazines and information about legislative issues. Additional labor requests focused on timely and up-to-date statistical information including, but not limited to, employment, commerce, finances, business cycle barometers, job classifications, cost of living indices, workmen's compensation problems, legal decisions, and pension plans.

To provide a context for library services from labor's perspective, the following selected labor milestones will serve as background information about the union movement in American history. The events have been extracted from the work of James Green (2001) in his book, *Democracy at Work: The Union Movement in U.S. History*, and can be viewed on the AFL-CIO Web site (<http://www.aflcio.org>). Green begins his timeline from the 1600s, but this report will cite only the labor events beginning with the first recorded association between trade unions and the public library (1824) through the close of the twentieth century.

- Labor's struggles for freedom—1800 through 1865. During this time, mill girls in Lowell, Massachusetts, protested wage cuts, and in other cities, strikes were organized to promote a ten-hour work day. New Hampshire enacted the first state ten-hour day, while shoemakers went on strike in New England.
- Origins of the modern labor movement—1866 through 1898. The National Labor Union, the Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labor, Colored National Labor Union, the American Federation of Labor, and the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions were all formed at this time. The Carpenters Union strike won an eight-hour day for some 28,000 members. Many strikes took place: the Iron and Steel Workers were defeated in a lockout, an integrated general strike in New Orleans succeeded, and a boycott of Pullman sleeping cars led to a general strike on the railroad.
- The Progressive Era—1899 through 1919. During this time, there were many strikes and many advances of organized labor, and the U.S. Industrial Commission declared trade unions good for democracy. During this era more unions, including the Women's Trade Union League and the Industrial Workers of the World, were founded. One of every five workers walked out in a great wave of strikes, including the "Uprising of 20,000" female shirtwaist makers in New York, who protested the sweatshop conditions that had led to the Triangle factory fire that killed 150

workers; the strike of unorganized immigrant steel workers in McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania; and the “Bread and Roses” strike of Lawrence, Massachusetts, which resulted in 23,000 men, women, and children going on strike. At this time, the government passed a bill creating the Department of Labor.

- The Recession and the Depression—1920 through 1933. The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters was created. The Railway Labor Act set up procedures to settle railway labor disputes and forbade discrimination against union members. President Franklin Roosevelt proposed the New Deal program to Congress.
- Democratizing America—1934 through 1945. During this decade, there was an upsurge in strikes, including a national textile strike, and the auto workers won a sit-down strike against General Motors. The Fair Labor Standards Act established the first minimum wage and a forty-hour work week. The Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO) formed first within AFL and then as an independent federation. A National War Labor Board, created with union members and the CIO, formed the first political action committee to get out the union vote for President Roosevelt.
- The fight for economic and social justice—1946 through 1968. The largest strike wave in U.S. history occurred during this period—and the Taft-Hartley Act restricted union members’ activities. The AFL and the CIO merged. The Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act, the Equal Pay Act, and the Civil Rights Act passed. There was a march on Washington for Jobs and Justice. An AFL-CIO United Farm Workers Organizing Committee was formed by Caesar Chavez. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated in Memphis during a Sanitation Workers’ strike.
- Progress and New Challenges—1970 through 2000. The Occupational Safety and Health Act was passed. Many new groups were formed including the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, the Coalition of Labor Union Women, the Organizing Institute, the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance within the AFL, and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. Pride At Work was established. AFL-CIO rallies 400,000 in Washington, D.C. on Solidarity Day and defeats legislation giving the president the ability to fast-track trade legislation without assured protection of workers’ rights and the environment. AFL-CIO membership shows renewed growth: more than 75,000 human service workers are unionized in Los Angeles county, 5,000 North Carolina textile workers gain a union after a twenty-five-year struggle, 65,000 Puerto Rico public sector workers join unions, and the union movement organizes its biggest program of grassroots electoral politics ever.

Today the diversity of American unions and the working families they represent demands that libraries be more relevant and accessible to active

and retired union members. Meyers (1999) states, "The gateway that libraries open for individuals and groups to information, personal fulfillment, and building better communities also holds much potential for work with unions" (p. 52). The AFL-CIO is the voluntary federation of sixty-four of America's unions, representing more than 16.3 million union members in America in 2000 with a cross section of people—women and men of all ages, races, and ethnic groups. They work in hospitals and nursing homes, schools, auto assembly plants and on construction sites, trains, buses, and airplanes. They include teachers, librarians, musicians, electricians, postal workers, and janitors. In addition, union families and millions of union retirees should also be included in this population of potential library users. In the AFL-CIO, workers and unions find the opportunity to combine strength and to work together to improve the lives of America's working families, bring fairness and dignity to the workplace, and to secure social and economic equity in the nation.

LIBRARY SERVICE TO LABOR UNIONS AND THEIR PARTNERSHIP

In July 1945, the ALA proposed the appointment of a joint committee representing the American Federation of Labor, the Congress of Industrial Organizations, the Grand Lodge Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, and the ALA. The overall objective was to discover ways of encouraging and assisting public libraries to develop specialized library services useful to labor. In October 1945, the ALA Executive Board authorized its president to appoint such a committee, named the AFL-CIO/ALA Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups. Representative members were appointed from each organization and, in July 1950, the joint committee was made an ALA standing committee. Objectives included the provision of adequate source materials in research collections on various phases of the labor movement; the operation of a joint educational program for local librarians and local labor leaders; library provision of objective and timely materials to support public understanding of labor problems; adequate provision of library materials for the use of labor organizations; and the encouragement of greater library use by working people in general. Later, its purpose was expanded to promote outreach going both ways—to encourage unions to make better use of the services that many libraries offer.

In addition to partnership meetings and labor programs presented at the ALA conferences, the joint committee provided and promoted services to labor through the publication of newsletters and bibliographies. The committee issued a quarterly *Library Service to Labor Newsletter* (*Newsletter*) that printed contributions by librarians and labor that promoted, guided, and advised ways to develop the partnership. The *Newsletter* was not only an important resource and guide, but also served to provide the history of library services to labor and to assess their successes and failures.

Unfortunately, in 1970, due to severe budgetary cutbacks at ALA, the association moved to discontinue funding of the joint committee's *Newsletter* and other ALA committee publications and projects. The withdrawal of ALA funding was a severe setback to the joint committee and the labor members held a special meeting to determine their future participation. The conclusion of the *Guide for Developing a Public Library Service to Labor Groups* in its successive years of publication states: "Both parties must realize that, as in all partnerships, there is no easy and final adjustment. There must be continuing effort, inspired by the conviction on both sides that this enterprise can and will benefit both the labor movement and the library" (*Guide for Developing a Public Library Service to Labor Groups*, 1973, p. 5). The partnership survived and continues its struggles not only to survive but also to thrive as libraries and labor change with the times.

The Guide for Developing a Public Library Service to Labor Groups, first published in 1958, was meant to stimulate interest in the area, to give a basic understanding of some of the problems involved, and to furnish practical suggestions for librarians wanting to develop services to unions in the community. Included is a bibliography of basic materials for a public library collection. The guide answers the question, "Why library service to trade unions?" and describes how to make contact with unions, discusses types of services, and includes a list of selected materials and resources.

Since the late 1960s, according to Imhoff and Brandwein (1976), there was a shift in many libraries from an emphasis in treating labor as a special group and providing them with special services, to treating labor as a group of patrons with no special needs (p. 2). They stated that the shift away from labor brought the service emphasis to economically and culturally disadvantaged and bilingual patrons. A survey was mailed to 950 public libraries in 1967 to query them about available services. There were 384 surveys returned, a 40.4 percent response rate. The results were useful as a benchmark for another survey administered in 1976.

In 1975, the joint committee focused its efforts on the preparation of a new questionnaire on service to labor. A pretest questionnaire was sent to ten public libraries prior to the survey administration. In the spring of 1976, the questionnaire was sent to public libraries in communities over 10,000 with a central labor council. Seven hundred and twenty-three surveys were mailed and returned with a response rate of 53.2 percent. Kathleen Imhoff and Larry Brandwein were responsible for the survey development. Its purpose was to ascertain the status of existing labor collections and services throughout the United States, to learn of future plans for service to labor groups, to determine what help the library would like to have from unions if the library planned to develop a service plan for labor, and to obtain information to be used for the AFL-CIO/ALA joint committee's publication program. Imhoff and Brandwein concluded from an analysis of the results:

(1) Since 1967, the number of special labor collections . . . the number of staff with labor-related job assignments, the number of libraries working with labor organizations, and the amount of interest in providing service to labor organizations and/or their membership has steadily declined. (2) There was a surprising amount of mistrust and lack of understanding of anything connected with unions shown by the librarians answering the questionnaire. (3) Of the librarians that did say they wanted to provide service to labor groups, many stated that they had received no cooperation from the union. (Imhoff & Brandwein, 1977, p. 156)

Imhoff's follow-up to the questionnaire analysis of results, "Library Service to Labor Groups 1977—Dead or Alive?," revealed the answer to be that the service to labor groups is more dead than alive. She stated that librarians taking the survey assumed either that labor unions were well established or that local unions have large amounts of money to spend and should pay for special services. She found that librarians' mistrust of unions ran rampant in the responses. The joint committee was to use the information collected to develop materials to help the libraries that would like to improve, to expand, to organize special materials, or to plan labor programs. The committee's charge was also to determine whether to accept the status quo or to create new services (Imhoff, 1977).

The results of the 1976 survey were included in the testimony of Dorothy Shields, Assistant Director of Education, AFL-CIO, to the White House Conference on Libraries, 15–19 November 1979. Her testimony focused on library services to labor and what the AFL-CIO determined to be significant shortcomings in this area. Shield's statement reaffirmed AFL-CIO support for the adequate funding of public libraries and called for sharply increased collections and programs that speak to the role of the labor movement in American history, its economy, the world of work for young people, and labor's role in the arts and humanities.

Shields spoke to the misconceptions and lack of information that librarians have had about union members and emphasized labor's hope that the public library would be the repository of resource material on labor for the nation, especially for school children to research and learn. Specifically, libraries should collect materials that reflect the contribution of the laboring worker to the development of democracy, to music and literature, and to the progressive social legislation for the safety, health, and welfare of the workers and their families.

Her statement included the findings of the 1976 public library survey that the joint committee found disturbing: that librarians mistrusted unions and dismissed them as valid consumer groups; that many librarians assumed that union members had reading problems and ignored the reality of union members' educational level; and that some librarians indicated that basic information about union organizing should be excluded from public libraries. As a spokesman for the AFL-CIO, Shields suggested that librarians need-

ed assistance, education, and in-service training in order to recognize labor's contribution to society. The AFL-CIO local unions would be helpful to public librarians in this regard.

It was recommended that labor should be represented on library trustee boards; libraries should provide balanced labor collections; libraries should maintain the necessary technical information and economic data to provide help to unions in their collective bargaining research efforts; librarians should be impartial in their labor-management judgments when selecting materials; librarians should work with union members and their families; and labor should encourage members to continue their advocacy for public library support. As a follow-up and confirmation of organized labor's commitment, the December 1979 *AFL-CIO News* confirmed union aid to libraries for their source materials on labor.

The reality for public libraries to maintain and build their materials and resources for special services was not good: over the last several decades public libraries across the nation experienced serious financial difficulties due to a poor national economy and to state and local cutbacks in their funding. As a result, libraries have been forced to cut their staffing and hours and have attempted to serve the public with deteriorating collections and services. The ongoing fiscal crisis in public libraries across the country has recently led to closures estimated at approximately one library per week. Following these events there have been news reports, editorials, and citizens calling attention to a nationwide library crisis that affects the educational, cultural, and economic potential of all citizens as their access to the resources of the library are diminished or extinguished (Hubbard, 1996, p.1).

The public library crisis remained in effect as new computer technology, the Internet, and the World Wide Web were introduced as part of the information age. Libraries needed the resources to adapt to the changing world in which technology made an impact on the way people worked and learned. Labor was adapting to the new technology to benefit their organizing efforts, to support their collective bargaining research, and to gather information to counter management efforts against strikes and to break union organizing efforts, as they were also adapting to a new world of work in a global economy. Labor's needs as a special service group have expanded in recent decades. Workers have required training to use the new technology and have needed libraries to provide the computers, software, electronic databases, and Internet connections they lacked.

Public librarians have ready-made partners in organized labor to advocate for the adequate local funding to invest in computer technology and Internet connections for all citizens. Labor union members must reach out to library resources in their own neighborhoods and communities to strengthen a partnership that needs renewal.

CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER STUDY

American public libraries and labor unions developed as institutions during the nineteenth century with their historical roots intertwined. Both had strong democratic ideals and a firm commitment to free, quality education for all Americans. From these beginnings, partnerships between libraries and labor would grow to the mutual benefit of each. As libraries and organized labor became more established and grew in various ways to remain relevant to their constituents and members, their services and needs grew.

For libraries, their services, materials, and collections for special groups changed to reflect the demographics of the nation. Since the late 1960s, there was a shift in many libraries from an emphasis in treating organized labor as a special group and providing them with special services, to treating labor as a group with no special needs. The shift moved toward service to economically and culturally disadvantaged and bilingual patrons. During this period, unions were fighting for economic and social justice—resulting in the largest strike wave in U.S. history, laws restricting union member activities, marches on Washington for jobs and justice, and the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., during a Sanitation Workers' strike. Labor was fighting for occupational safety and health issues, AFL-CIO membership was beginning to show renewed growth, and new coalitions were being formed within the national labor federation. Organized labor's needs were increasing for collective bargaining research information, demographic information, legislative issues, cost of living indices, pension plans, legal decisions on labor court cases, and related issues.

Research shows that, while organized labor had an increased need for library services and information to help with complex issues, librarians were distrustful of unions, had lowered opinions of union members' educational status, and did not consider unions to be a viable consumer group. Research also shows that unions in general did not reach out to libraries to ask for assistance.

New steps toward more effective interaction between labor and libraries include initiatives between AFL-CIO state and central labor councils and public library systems to educate each about opportunities for stronger collaboration. Public libraries that offer computer training for citizens should reach out to groups in their community, including labor groups. Research skills and database training can focus on the economic, financial, legal, and government information that union members seek. Also, job search skills and employment placement opportunities offered by some urban area libraries is a feature to be pursued for union and nonunion workers. The vast infrastructure of libraries in every community provides a ready-made physical resource for union organizing, education, training, and research for informed citizens to improve their society and to seek economic and social justice in the new globalized world.

Unions and libraries are both at a critical crossroad of their development. Both could develop their future relevance to America's working families with a renewal of mutual outreach that strengthens the bonds of a democratic society. Globalization and the Internet's impact on libraries and working Americans makes it imperative that efforts are made to develop new connections between leaders of libraries and unions.

REFERENCES

- ALA Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups. (1958; 1973). *Guide for developing a public library service to labor groups*. Chicago: American Library Association, Adult Services Division.
- Carnegie, Andrew to Herbert Spencer, TLS, 5 January 1887. Carnegie Correspondence, Special Collections, William R. Oliver Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
- Carnegie, Andrew to William Frey, TLS, 1 July 1895, Carnegie Correspondence, Special Collections, William R. Oliver Room, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh.
- Cohen, G. (1963). Library service to labor: Historical roots and current needs. In D. K. Oko & B. F. Downey (Eds.), *Library service to labor* (pp. 51–61). New York: Scarecrow Press.
- Curti, M. (1943). *Growth of American thought*. New York: Harper.
- Ditzion, S. H. (1947). *Arsenals of a democratic culture*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- Garceau, O. (1949). *The public library in the political process*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Godfrey, M. (1963). Reference services to unions. In D. K. Oko & B. F. Downey (Eds.), *Library services to labor* (pp. 93–108). New York: Scarecrow Press.
- Green, J. (in press). *Democracy at work: The union movement in U.S. history*. Washington, D.C.: AFL-CIO. Retrieved December 1, 2001, from http://www.aflcio.org/gallery_hist/history_timeline.htm.
- Hubbard, E. (1996). *A conflict of values: An inquiry into the impact of local political decision-making on the funding of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh in three selected decades*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh.
- Humphrey, P. (1963). Toward library-labor cooperation. In D. K. Oko & B. F. Downey (Eds.), *Library service to labor* (pp. 29–38). New York: Scarecrow Press.
- Imhoff, K. (1977). Library service to labor groups 1977—Dead or alive? Unpublished paper. AFL-CIO Department of Education Papers. George Meany Memorial Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.
- Imhoff, K., & Brandwein, L. (1977). Labor collections and services in public libraries throughout the United States, 1976. *RQ* 17(2), 149–158.
- Jeavons, T. H. (1994). *Public libraries and private fund raising: opportunities and issues*. Chicago: Urban Libraries Council.
- Kemsley, B. (1963). Labor looks at the public library. In D. K. Oko and B. F. Downey (Eds.), *Library service to labor* (pp. 13–17). New York: Scarecrow Press.
- A library, a lady, and labor. (1960). *Catering industry employee*. pp. 13–16. [Labor newsletter]. AFL-CIO Department of Education Papers. George Meany Memorial Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.
- Meyers, A. S. (1999). Building a partnership: Library services to labor. *American Libraries* 30(7), 52–55.
- Oko, D. K., & Downey, B. F. (Eds.). (1963). *Library service to labor*. New York: Scarecrow Press.
- Pfeffer, J., & Salancik, G. R. (1978). *The external control of organizations: A resource dependence perspective*. New York: Harper and Row.
- [Untitled article]. *Pittsburgh Dispatch*. (1892, September 11). p. 3.
- Shera, J. H. (1949). *Foundations of the public library*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Shields, D. (1979, November 17). Statement of Dorothy Shields, Assistant Director of Education, AFL-CIO, White House Conference on Library and Information Services, Silver Spring, MD. George Meany Memorial Archives. AFL-CIO Department of Education Papers.

Service to the Labor Community: A Pubic Library Perspective

ANN C. SPARANESE

ABSTRACT

SINCE THE EARLIEST DAYS OF THE NATION, American workers have been viewed as primary beneficiaries of the establishment of the free public library. They have been the focus of public library development, whether for the fortification of their education or for social control, as a counter force to the upheavals of workers in Europe. At various times in its history, the public library has concentrated on workers, specifically the organized labor movement, as both clientele to be served and as partners in cooperative educational work. Although their numbers have diminished in the last decade, unions in the year 2000 still represented 16.3 million U.S. workers—13.5 percent of all working people in the U.S. ("Union Membership," 2002, p. 1)—arguably a greater number of individual members than any other American social justice or secular organization. If union retirees and union households are taken into consideration, a very high percentage of Americans are indeed included in the community of organized labor which potentially interacts with the public library. Historically, significant forms of outreach, programming, and cooperative services designed specifically for workers have been undertaken by public libraries across the country, many in cooperation with the labor movement. In addition, public libraries have endeavored to address the needs of the American workforce both as individuals and as labor union members. In order to make these endeavors more productive today, the needs of the labor community, both individually and collectively, must be considered. As the labor movement itself has changed and developed, in terms of membership demographics, size, and expressed goals, the public library's service to this important sector must also grow and evolve.

THE LITERATURE OF LABOR AND LIBRARIES

Of the various types of libraries throughout the country, the public library undoubtedly has had the longest, deepest, most intimate, and yet most ambivalent relationship with the labor movement. Considering the size of the labor community and its own long history, there is a relatively small body of library literature addressing the relationship between these two institutions. Literature concerning public library service to the labor movement reached a high point during a time when the labor movement was at its strongest and ebbed with the movement's decline in membership and influence. The subject of library service to labor does receive a major visitation every decade or so; each time the amount and size of this literature appears directly proportional to the size and strength of the labor movement itself. As the labor movement has itself gradually decreased, literature dealing with library service to labor has also declined.

In the middle to late 1800s, articles in the literature focused on the task of reaching workers with the message of the democratizing effect and educational uplift provided by libraries. This included the preamble to the Massachusetts Library Law of 1847 (Ditzion, 1947, pp. 18–19). In the early 1900s, library literature was developed in support of the Workers' Education Movement, a group that strove to provide workers with a class-oriented view of the world and society as well as education in their fields (Dwyer, 1977, pp. 27–151). In the 1940s and 1950s, years which coincided with the greatest growth of union membership and strength in our society (in 1954, 35 percent of all private sector workers were union members), a number of dissertations (Goshin, 1941; Poll, 1953; Sullivan, 1953) were produced on the relationship between libraries and labor, culminating in 1963 with a full-length book, edited by Dorothy Kuhn Oko, a developer and leader in library service to labor at the New York Public Library, in collaboration with B.F. Downey. Published by the American Library Association (ALA), *Library Service to Labor* was a landmark contribution, pulling together many of the articles published in the newsletter *Library Service to Labor*, produced for many years by the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)/ALA Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups. This book, considered the "bible" of library services to labor unions, presented historical background, theory, practical ideas, and case studies on how public libraries could reach out to and serve organized labor. Though this work is now dated, it has no contemporary equivalent, particularly with the elimination in 1970 of the *Library Service to Labor* newsletter, the source of much of its material. Even with a forty-year gap and changes in information technology, many of the ideas presented in this book are as relevant today as they were in 1963. In 1976, the last survey of labor collections and services in public libraries was done by the joint committee. Of the 723 questionnaires sent out, 18 of 385 responding libraries reported that they had special labor collections, and 14 had a staff mem-

ber assigned to work with labor, down from 22 in the previous survey of 1967 (Imhoff & Brandwein, 1977, p. 151). Today, even the New York Public Library no longer has a staff member specifically devoted to work with labor.

While no monograph discussing public library service to labor has been published since the 1960s, several articles were published in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. The work of the joint committee was reported annually in the ALA Yearbooks until they, too, ceased in 1986. A significant contribution to this subject was D. W. Schneider's 1990 chapter "Library Service to Labor Groups," in ALA's *Adult Services: An Enduring Focus for Public Libraries*. At the time of Schneider's article, the labor movement was in decline, with union membership accounting for only 16 percent of the work force, much of this represented by workers in the public sector. By the time Art Meyers' short, "Building a Partnership: Library Service to Labor" article appeared in *American Libraries*, figures were even lower. Since this time union statistics have continued to drop, with membership in unions now hovering at around 13 percent of the workforce, much diminished from its peak membership of 32.3 percent in 1954. Union membership in the private, nonagricultural sector now stands at less than 10 percent, while the government sector unionization is almost 38 percent.

While the AFL-CIO's current president John Sweeney is dedicated to massive organizing campaigns, forces in the new global economy have continued to wreak havoc with labor organizations. Although federation affiliate international unions organized over 800,000 new members in 2000, the federation still registered a net loss of 219,000 members in that year. At a recent northeast regional conference of the AFL-CIO's Central Labor Councils (the grassroots, local extensions of the AFL-CIO affiliated unions), Richard Trumpka, Secretary-Treasurer, projected the need to organize 1 million workers per year in order to register any net gains in union membership and offset the loss of union jobs through globalization, downsizing, and the destruction of the U.S. industrial base. Clearly this is a goal of epic proportions, but it reveals a strong new direction for the AFL-CIO that is likely to result in organizing activity in local communities served by public libraries.

Despite the drop in current membership percentages of the work force, unionized workers, their households, and retirees still represent an exceedingly significant sector of the U.S. population; in actual numbers they are 1 million more than during the years in which their percentage in the labor force was higher (Labor Research Association, 2002). Furthermore, union membership is no longer limited to white males in skilled or unskilled trades. Unions now represent a wide cross section of the American social and political body, with women and people of color in greater numbers than ever before. As previously noted, 37.5 percent of all government workers are presently unionized, many of whom are women. Teachers and other professionals are joining unions, even as the traditional manufacturing workers are losing their jobs. The AFL-CIO has taken on the challenge of

organizing immigrants, regardless of their legal status, where they exist in the workforce. Therefore, despite the loss of percentage points in the overall population, unions still represent millions of U.S. workers. These numbers are evidence of a defined community, their ranks as numerous as any other traditional public library partner or constituency. The question and challenge for public libraries then is how to reach and adequately serve this ever evolving population. Any literature addressing library service to the labor community must take into account the current labor situation as well as the history that public libraries and the labor movement share.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND—LABOR AND LIBRARIES GROW UP TOGETHER AND APART

The relationship between the labor movement and the public library goes back to the days of the emergence of both institutions in the early to mid-nineteenth century. In 1820, special libraries were developed for the education of mechanics and apprentices in the trades, in order to help them to improve their skills and general education on a local and institutional level. Libraries of this type were established in cities throughout the eastern United States, including New York City, Boston, Portland, Salem, and Philadelphia. As manufacturing shifted from the small workshop to the factory, some employers established factory libraries for the practical education and personal enrichment of their employees. One such library was at the Pacific Mills in Lawrence, Massachusetts, which was established for the sole use of its employees, who were assessed one cent a week to maintain the library and its associated lecture hall. In some communities, these libraries were used by the public, such as the Cambria Library Association in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, which was supported by the Cambria Iron Corporation but open to the entire community.

The benefits to the working classes were part of the rationale for the movement toward larger, tax-supported institutions. Both the labor and public library movements grew rapidly between the 1850s and 1890s. At least one librarian writing about this parallel growth drew a cause and effect relationship between the shortening of working hours, and the subsequent acquisition of more leisure time by the worker, with the growth of and demand for libraries: "By and large the rapid multiplication of libraries between 1850 and 1890 was synchronous with the labor movement and the achievement of shorter working hours" (Borden, 1931, p. 282). According to Ditzion (1947), "By 1890, librarians . . . conceived it as their special mission to bring the library to the industrial employee" (p. 118), using methods such as distributing pamphlets and book lists among employees as they left the factories, sending circulars to manufacturers requesting them to encourage their workers to use the public libraries, and placing library borrowers' application forms at strategic locations in the mills (p. 119). At the first meeting of the National Labor Union in 1866, a resolution was passed, calling for the

establishment of "workmen's lyceums and free reading rooms" (Ditzion, 1947, p. 121). Other labor organizations, including the Workingmen's Union in New York and the National Labor Reform passed similar resolutions. The establishment of a public library in Chicago was preceded by a call from the *Workingman's Advocate*, a labor newspaper of the day, to city employers to establish reading rooms and libraries for their own workers. While the labor movement was not in the forefront of the establishment of public libraries, it did play significant roles in cities such as Washington, D.C., and Buffalo in the 1890s. (Ditzion, 1947, pp. 120–123).

In the second half of the nineteenth century, a type of class warfare was ongoing in U.S. social institutions, reflected in the debate over what was considered suitable material for collection by public libraries:

The shape of [library] collections and the mission they identified reflect a struggle that never ceased to take place during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: the struggle of taste and the selection of works to be admitted into the realm of high culture. The motives for starting public libraries included a wish to collect and preserve important writings, a genuine commitment to educate people, and a desire to use books as a means of social control. (Cayton, 1993, p. 2482)

This element of social control involved not only the concept of high versus low culture, but the idea, prevalent among the intellectual founders of the public library such as George Ticknor, Francis Wayland, and Edward Everett, that libraries would provide an antidote to the revolutionary fervor present among the working classes in Europe. The library would not only have a democratizing effect, but literacy and reading would combat the political extremes that they believed were the result of illiteracy and ignorance. The "quiet, conservative mood of the library was hailed as a tempering agency for an unsettled era . . . Educated workers would have sober views on economic questions and consequently would not be led like cattle by radical leaders" (Ditzion, 1947, pp. 134–135). An article in *Library Journal* in 1898 decried the situation that "laboring men could not discriminate between their own real interest and such sham reforms as are brought before them by their so-called labor leaders" and argued that libraries would offer another side of the question than was fed to them by their trade unions (cited in Ditzion, 1947, p. 137).

The questions of which type of reading to promote was also a reflection of, and had an influence on, the class bias of the newly emerging public libraries. When librarians founded the ALA in 1876, they seemed to ally themselves with those wanting to protect higher culture from the influences of the newer, cheaper, dime novels and the pulp fiction appearing at the time. Cayton (1993) points out that, "Designed to ameliorate class friction during a period of high tensions by making 'good' reading materials democratically available, the style and values of the public libraries of the period often left members of the working classes cold" (p. 2440).

Between 1881 and 1917, steel industrialist Andrew Carnegie donated over \$41 million to finance the building of public libraries, with the stipulation that local communities agreed to tax citizens and allocate 10 percent of building costs for the annual upkeep of their libraries. These grants, the foundation of so many great public libraries, caused a significant rift between the working class and the public library. Although Andrew Carnegie may be remembered as a philanthropist today, at the turn of the century strong opposition to his gifts came from the labor movement. Carnegie was viewed by the movement as a low-wage advocate and the antagonist of the Homestead Mills Strike of 1892 in which over forty workers were killed in a battle with Pinkerton detectives, notorious at this time for working as strikebreakers. While Carnegie's speeches often centered on the benefits to workers of his library philanthropy, labor and its allies viewed his actions as a "shrewd policy. . .to expend a trifle of the gains which [were] made off the people in giving them public libraries. Why libraries? Because he who selects the libraries, as he who makes the songs, of a people may be expected to frame its laws" (Ditzion, 1947, pp. 136–137).

Eugene Debs, leader of the American Railway Union, denounced Carnegie's hypocritical philanthropy in no uncertain terms and urged workers to reject Carnegie's libraries. "We want libraries," Debs said, "and we will have them in glorious abundance when Capitalism is abolished and workingmen are no longer robbed by the philanthropic pirates of the Carnegie class . . . Then the library will be, as it should be, a noble temple dedicated to culture and symbolizing the virtues of the people" (cited in Ditzion, 1947, p. 163).

Samuel Gompers, head of the more pragmatic and conservative American Federation of Labor, had a different approach. "Yes," Gompers advised, "accept his [Carnegie's] library, organize the workers, secure better conditions and, particularly, reduction in hours of labor, and then the workers will have the chance and leisure in which to read books" (cited in Ditzion, 1947, p. 162). Despite Debs's and others' resistance, Gompers's viewpoint prevailed, and libraries were built and accepted by most communities (with the notable exception of Homestead and Pittsburgh—where the bitterness of Carnegie's strikebreaking was most vivid). As a result, "many members of the working class saw [Carnegie's] beneficence as part of an elitist and paternalistic scheme of social control and resisted using the new facilities" (Cayton, 1993, p. 2440).

LABOR EDUCATION AND THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

The 1920s and 1930s saw the formation of schools for workers created by trade unions and socialist organizations in the United States. The goal of what became known as the Worker Education Movement was to promote understanding of the social and economic realities governing workers' lives. Although course titles were similar to those in more traditional classrooms, the content focused on the contributions of workers and their place in

history. Librarians and writers in the workers' education field produced short pieces in both the library and workers education press, illustrating ways in which public libraries could aid the workers' education movement. Eduard Lindeman, a writer and theorist in the field of adult education produced some of these pieces, including a pamphlet printed by the Workers' Education Bureau entitled "Workers' Education and the Public Libraries" (Lindeman, 1926). Similar articles appeared in the trade union press, including the *American Federationist*, *Library Journal*, and the *Wilson Library Bulletin*. Occasionally an article was printed in a library journal and then reprinted in the trade union journal. This body of work extended through the 1940s as librarians became increasingly conscious of serving a growing and dynamic labor movement which now had its own educational arm with which libraries could directly link.

THE PIVOTAL ROLE OF THE AFL-CIO/ALA JOINT COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY SERVICE TO LABOR GROUPS

In 1945, George Meany, the Secretary-Treasurer of the AFL, urged union members to become active on library boards. Meany believed that "Adequate libraries are an essential part of the educational and recreational opportunity which we provide for ourselves in America. They can help us to achieve a fuller life and to become better citizens and better trade unionists" (cited in Soltow, 1984, p.164). Both the CIO and the AFL became partners with the ALA when the Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups was formed in 1945. The merged AFL-CIO supported the original Library Services Act, put before Congress in 1956, legislation that continues to provide the basis for direct federal aid for public libraries.

In 1945, the AFL-CIO/ALA Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups was founded in order to "discover ways of encouraging and assisting public libraries to develop specialized library services which will be useful to labor groups" (McBride, as cited in Schneider, 1990, p. 298). The newsletter of the joint committee, *Library Service to Labor*, was published from 1948 to 1970 (when it was eliminated in a cost-cutting move by ALA) and documented efforts made by public libraries with case studies, bibliographies, and examples of successful programming to reach labor; in doing so the journal motivated libraries with new ideas. As has been noted in more than one article about libraries and labor:

One of the periods of most active service existed in the 1950s to the mid-1960s at a time when the American Library Association Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups was most active in pressing for such services. Since that time, there has been a decline in services, particularly at the public library level, with the disappearance of special services for labor from such noted libraries as the New York Public Library and the Detroit Public Library. (Downey, as cited in Schneider, 1990, p. 299)

During the 1950s, 1960s, and into the early 1970s, several metropolitan library systems, notably New York, Boston, Milwaukee, Newark, and Akron established active labor outreach and collections programs. In a landmark book, *Library Service to Labor* (Okon and Downey, 1963), Dorothy Kuhn Okon wrote about the desirability of assigning a knowledgeable professional as labor librarian—a luxury that few public libraries would consider today—or even believe there was a need for!

The John A. Sessions Memorial Award, named for the long-standing AFL-CIO cochair of the joint committee and the assistant director of the AFL-CIO's Department of Education, was established in 1979 to recognize a library or library system that has created or carried out significant service to the labor community (ALA, 2001, p. 120). Throughout its history (see the Appendix) the winner was frequently a university or special library. But public libraries have continued to distinguish themselves by developing innovative labor programming, building collections in the area of labor, and providing outreach, some in remarkable ways. (This writer served as chair of the Sessions Award Committee in 2000 and 2001.) The recent increase in public library activity mirrors the rebirth of the labor movement itself, the visibility of its recent organizing drives, and the fresh inclusiveness of the new, forward-looking AFL-CIO leadership led by John Sweeney. Labor is shedding the narrow, conservative, and inward-looking focus it has held for the past several decades and is reinventing itself as a broad social justice movement. The continuing relationship between the public library and the labor movements may well depend on the ongoing evolution of the labor movement itself, as well as its visibility, expressed needs, and labor's own desire to establish community partnerships. The recent activities in public libraries reflect the new consciousness of the labor movement itself. While it may not be registering net gains, there is no doubt that a rejuvenation of the labor movement is afoot. Libraries could well play a significant educational role in this process.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF LABOR TODAY

In order for public libraries to provide adequate service to labor today, libraries must define the "labor community" and assess this community's information needs. As is pointed out in "Library Service to Labor Groups," the 1989 guideline produced by the Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups, trade unionists "are concerned about the same things as everyone else in their communities. They are parents, consumers, taxpayers and concerned citizens" (AFL-CIO/ALA Joint Committee, 1989, [unpaginated]).

LIBRARIES AND EMPLOYMENT

Many public libraries have services that are aimed at workers both as union clientele and as individuals. These services include job information

centers, career materials, vocational exploration resources and, in some cases, job counseling. Several winners of the Sessions Memorial Award established exemplary services of this kind. The economic turmoil of the 1980s produced programs such as those initiated by the Jackson-George Regional Library System in Pascagoula, Mississippi, involving unions along with a wide spectrum of community organizations in addressing the many needs of the unemployed (Meyers, 1999, p. 53). This project included the production of an information kit for the unemployed, among whose ranks were 19–26 percent of the county workforce in 1983. Bibliographies were produced, bulletin boards were established for job posting, and bartering for goods and services took place. The Lorain (Ohio) Public Library, another Sessions winner, initiated an approach to the problem of unemployment in their area by developing a resource collection and career-planning advisory service, also with community support and input. Cuyahoga County's (Ohio) Public Library's InfoPlace is over twenty-five years old and has the services of three career counselors, a research librarian, and the facilities to videotape mock interviews. Among other community agencies, InfoPlace has a relationship with the local United Labor Agency, the community services arm of the Central Labor Council. This author's posts on various listservs to gather materials for this article often resulted in responses that had to do with this kind of employment-oriented service, though not necessarily in conjunction with organized labor. This is true for the Mid-Hudson Library (Poughkeepsie, New York) System's "Libraries & Labor: A Virtual Connection," an extensive use of the public library as a satellite location for the state's workforce development system. Although the libraries enhanced collaborative ties with the New York State Department of Labor and reached out to workers throughout the area, the project did not involve direct outreach to or involvement with organized labor.

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY AND THE UNION CITIES INITIATIVE— EXPLORING POTENTIAL INITIATIVES

The AFL-CIO now estimates that its member unions must organize at least 1 million people per year if the labor movement is to stay viable in this era of global capitalism, free trade, and U.S. industrial and manufacturing shrinkage. Part of the federation's strategy is to reactivate its role as the largest, most multiethnic, multiracial social justice organization in the United States, joining with others in the community to fight on varied issues and thereby to create a more favorable climate for successful union organizing.

The Union Cities program—the name given to this aggressive strategy—is first and foremost about organizing. An increase in organizing efforts will likely result in the increased need by organizers for the type of information public libraries are well suited to provide: analysis of community demographics, industry listings for a particular area, workers in these indus-

tries, and the ties, connections, and points of leverage for employees in the various industries (Cohen, 2001, interview).

While the national AFL-CIO maintains a research division, as do most international unions, the need for local information is paramount to people working in the community. Organizers in the public sector need information on local budgets, government structures, ordinances, etc. Organizers in both the public and private sector need maps for house calls and addresses of workers, information which is public but not necessarily easy to retrieve. They may also need meeting space in the local community, a service the public library provides routinely to many organizations.

In addition to organizing, trade unions engaged in contract bargaining need information to help them cost out their contracts, that is, to ascertain what the real costs of benefits are in the local market and what wage scales are in the local industries or in surrounding towns. They are trying to assess what is realistic in terms of pay and benefits; where the employer has a public face or has appeared in news sources; or where the employer might be responsive to the pressure of public persuasion. Political and legislative information, census information, laws relating to the right to work—all this “factual information becomes crucial” (Cohen, 2001, interview).

The AFL-CIO has also embarked on an ambitious campaign to rejuvenate its community roots by building its Central Labor Councils (CLCs). The CLCs are the local joint bodies of affiliated trade unions, which come together on a city or countywide basis. It is here that unions converge to discuss issues, make political endorsements, mobilize and support organizing. Delegates to the councils may be shop stewards, organizers, or business agents, but they are always local labor leaders. It is through the CLCs themselves that public libraries have the best opportunity to establish formal ties with the local labor movement. By partnering with the local CLC, librarians can provide valuable services to union members and their families, highlighting new resources, offering Internet training, and providing meeting space for educationally based union activities. Connecting with the Central Labor Councils is one of the key suggestions made by Dorothy Kuhn Oko in her 1963 anthology, a suggestion that remains as pertinent today as it was then.

Public libraries can provide a particularly useful service by maintaining a database or vertical file of collective bargaining contracts currently in force for businesses and public sector institutions in the area. It is often helpful for those negotiating a contract to read the contracts of others, though these contracts may be difficult to obtain. By partnering with a local CLC, librarians may be able to obtain contracts, thereby building useful and much needed databases, vertical files, and/or Web pages of information.

LIBRARIES AND THE UNION COUNSELOR PROGRAM

The Central Labor Councils have, for many years, carried out a program called Union Counselor Training (UCT). This worker education pro-

gram consists of a series of classes that educates union rank and file as well as business agents and organizers, about the various services in and about the community that are available to their members. Classes cover such topics as Social Security and Medicare, workers' compensation and other government programs, substance abuse programs, and other community services and resources. Currently, the public library is not part of the official Union Counselor Training. As the public library is the source of such a wealth of resources for the local community, librarians could suggest its inclusion in this curriculum by demonstrating the types of community, state, and national programs and services public libraries provide. In areas where the Central Labor Council lacks sufficient space for UCT classes, the public library could provide a meeting room.

One evening of the Union Counselor Training is a session called "Common Sense Economics," which is a short course in economics from a worker's point of view. The public library is well positioned to provide workers with the materials necessary to bolster their knowledge about the "new" economy, corporate globalism, the tax structure, and economic theory; in other words, material geared to support their self-education on these questions. Because the mission of the public library is to provide materials from a variety of viewpoints, it is well positioned to be an important resource for workers' continuing education.

Partnering with the CLC would almost certainly ensure the library a place on the UCT agenda. Librarians can easily approach the person responsible for the Union Counselor program at the CLC to see how the library can assist in the work he or she is doing. A presentation might be given by the librarian covering the services, facilities, and collections offered at the public library. Or, an actual meeting might be held at the library where participants can be given a tour of the facilities. A list of further reading on "Common Sense Economics" might be developed. Internet classes, featuring sites about labor, might be offered.

LABOR HISTORY MONTH

In 1999, Libraries for the Future, the library-advocacy organization, won the Sessions Award for its "Pump Up the Volume" campaign for Labor History Month. The month of May was first designated Labor History Month by President Bill Clinton in 1995, but it had been recognized in New York City for years prior to this proclamation. Historically, May has always been associated with labor, first and foremost with the May 1st workers' holiday, celebrated around the world, but with roots in the United States as a commemoration of the demonstrations in 1886 for the eight-hour work day. In 1995, Cynthia Lopez, the advocacy director for Libraries for the Future, the New York City-based organization that encourages the use and support of the public library, attended a meeting of the AFL-CIO/ALA Joint Committee on Service to Labor Groups in San Francisco. This meeting resulted in

a fruitful collaboration in which the production of materials and brochures on the importance of Labor History Month, along with suggested activities for public libraries and a bibliography entitled, "A Selected Bibliography for a Public Library Labor Studies Collection" (compiled by the author), were distributed to more than 100 public libraries. The Libraries for the Future project encouraged libraries across the United States to establish Labor History Month programming and activities. One group inspired by the project was the Friends of the St. Paul (Minnesota) Public Library, who established a Labor History Month series called "Untold Stories," which is profiled later in this paper.

ENGLEWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY UNION OUTREACH PROGRAM

For librarians, being unionized themselves can be an incentive to serve the labor community. A case in point is the Englewood Public Library in Englewood, New Jersey. In 1997, the reference librarians, including this author, and members of the Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Union, embarked on a project to involve the labor movement in the library and build its labor studies collection by applying for a collection development grant from the New Jersey State Library, which regularly awards grants for the development and evaluation of needed subject collections. A proposal for \$10,000 to build collections in employment and labor studies was submitted and subsequently awarded. With this money, a sizable collection of books on career development and labor history was built. Development of this collection was aided by a community advisory committee composed of trade unionists, community career counselors, staff representatives of the local Women's Rights Information Center, as well as two local labor history writers. As the collection grew, so did the project. In 1998, the library launched its first Labor History Month celebration. Events included a series of panel discussions on the labor movement, past, present, and future. In following years, programming consisted of a labor film series, a performance by the New York City Labor Chorus, major speakers from the trade union movement and, in 2001, the production of the labor play, *Marching to Union Square* by Dorothy Fennell, Director of Special Projects for Unions at the Cornell School of Industrial and Labor Relations in New York City. In order to produce this play, the library relied on grants and contributions from the ALA's Libraries Alive Grant program, the Bergen County Central Trades and Labor Council, and three local trade unions. Union label flyers are sent out to Central Labor Council affiliates with CLC mailings, and a list of local trade unions is now used to publicize events.

In order to serve labor, public libraries need to view the labor community in the same way as other communities are viewed. Creativity needs to be used to form partnerships and to win grants to serve organized labor and union members in the same way as relationships with other groups are developed.

LOCAL 17 "LABOR AND DEMOCRACY LIBRARY PROJECT"

Another take on the collaboration between libraries and labor unions was that of Local 17 International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers' Library and Democracy Project, initiated in 1998. Local 17 did an analysis of the Seattle Public Library's database as it reflected the library's labor collection and found that union materials were very limited and outdated. At the time of their study, Local 17 found that entering "unions" as a subject heading retrieved 959 matches. However, by entering "finance" as a subject heading, that count jumped to 5,868 titles. The subject heading "business" resulted in 6,876 matches. Dismayed by this disparity, Local 17 sought to raise funds for collection development in the area of labor.

Local 17 focused on the Seattle Public Library (SPL) for two reasons: First, the library is one of the most used in the U.S. A recent poll reported 75 percent of area residents using the library at least once in the twelve months previous to the survey. In addition, the library's reach extends to the entire population of King County, Washington (1,507,319 people). The second reason Local 17 chose SPL was in order to take advantage of a special matching fund that would allow them to double the money raised. The Seattle Public Library Foundation has a matching funds program funded by Microsoft magnate Paul Allen, in which every dollar raised for the library is matched by the foundation. Initially, the project raised about \$20,000 for books and videos for the labor collection. "It was a lot of work, but when Local 17 members and members of the labor community realized there wasn't a labor collection, they gave generously to the cause" (Joe McGee, personal communication, March 7, 2001), Local 17 Executive Director Joe McGee said. "How far does a book reach? The Seattle Public Library estimates that each book is circulated 50 times during its life. Since each book will have a 'Local 17 labor-donated' bookplate affixed to it, we have the opportunity to reach people with the message that 'labor is the community'" (International Federation, 2001, p. 1).

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY AND OF LABOR—"UNTOLD STORIES" AT THE ST. PAUL (MINNESOTA) PUBLIC LIBRARY

For the past three years, the Friends of the St. Paul (Minnesota) Public Library have produced an outstanding and inspirational program during May, "Labor History Month." Over the years, their programming has grown from a film series to their 2001 series of programs, which included activities at a half dozen of the library's thirteen branches as well as events at union halls and college campuses. Author visits during the 2001 celebration included a reading by Cheri Register from her book, *Packinghouse Daughter*, and by Bill Milliken from his book, *A Union Against Unions*, both recently published by the Minnesota Historical Society Press. Other programs included a performance of workers' songs by Larry Long, a local

troubador, and a walking tour of working-class historical sites in downtown St. Paul. Though initiated by the Friends, other organizations joined in the work for the celebration, including the St. Paul *Union Advocate*; the electronic news journal, "Workday Minnesota;" the University of Minnesota's Labor Education Service; Macalester College's History Department; as well as a number of local unions. Financial support for programming has been provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the St. Paul Trades & Labor Assembly, the United Auto Workers, and various foundations. With these resources, the library has highlighted Minnesota labor history and generated local press coverage. Commenting on programming, labor historian Peter Rachleff wrote, "This is a terrific model of collaboration—and legitimization of labor history. We could still do more with outreach, particularly to the local labor movement at large and the public schools, but we're getting better at it" (Rachleff, 2001).

MORE LOCAL LABOR HISTORY—THE BRIDGEPORT (CONNECTICUT) LOCAL LIBRARY'S WEB SITE

The World Wide Web has introduced a whole constellation of new ways in which public libraries can relate to the labor movement and labor history. All history is local and all local history has a labor element, if only it is uncovered and made known. The Bridgeport Public Library developed a Web site with a collection of graphics and oral histories of the labor movement in the area, entitled "Bridgeport Working: Voices From the Twentieth Century" (<http://www.bridgeporthistory.org/>). The site is devoted to photographs and oral histories of the working people of Bridgeport and is curated by the head of the historical collections of the library, Mary K. Witkowski, and her staff. The site gives visitors a glimpse of what it was like to work and live in Bridgeport, Connecticut, during the past century: "Who else could tell us but people who worked on the line in the factories; sold goods behind the counter at a department store; taught children in the local schools; ran a travel agency, worked as a housewife, drove a truck, or ran one of the many other prosperous businesses that helped Bridgeport grow and develop" ("Bridgeport History," 2001, p. 1). The photo gallery is organized by decade, and thirty different oral histories from workers—many in audio format—are organized by name. A local labor history bibliography is included. Projects such as these organized by local public libraries are essential to uncovering the "untold stories" of labor.

LABOR, YOUTH, AND A LOCAL LABOR TRAGEDY: THE LODI MEMORIAL LIBRARY EXPERIENCE

The 2000 winner of the John Sessions Memorial Award was a creative and moving collaborative project undertaken by the Lodi (New Jersey) Public Library, renowned labor muralist Mike Alewitz, local trade unions led by the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees, AFL-

CIO (UNITE), and high school students. On 21 April 1995, a violent explosion and fire at the Napp Technologies, Inc., plant in the working-class town of Lodi killed five workers, injured numerous others, and forced the evacuation of 300 residents and a school. An investigation revealed the accident was caused by a deadly combination of inadequate corporate practices and precautions along with the volatile chemicals, and the impact on the community was profound (Vial, 1997). "Workers' Memorial Day," celebrated nationally on 28 April of each year to bring attention to workers killed on the job (AFL-CIO, 2002) was the occasion for a project that focused on the creation of a memorial mural inside the Lodi Memorial Library. Public high school students studied the event at the library and in their classrooms. After their study, they worked with Mike Alewitz to paint a mural on the wall of the library, a permanent display to commemorate the deaths of the local workers and also to remind all who see it about the on-the-job deaths that occur each year. At the dedication ceremony, many trade union rank and file and leaders were in attendance.

CONCLUSION

The relationship between the public library and the labor movement has ebbed and flowed over the history of both institutions but is enjoying a renaissance in the current period. The activities of a number of public libraries demonstrate that there is service that can be rendered to and with the labor community that will enhance both institutions. Just as libraries have recognized their obligation to incorporate the interests and needs of the various social and ethnic communities they serve, as well as the needs of the businesses within their service area, they need to take into account the special interests and needs of unions and their members as they plan their libraries' work and outreach. As has been illustrated in this article, the partnership between labor and public libraries has been, and can continue to be, a mutually beneficial and rewarding one.

APPENDIX: WINNERS OF THE SESSIONS MEMORIAL AWARD FOR SERVICE TO LABOR

- 1981 Muncie (Indiana) Public Library
- 1982 Wagner Labor Archives, Bobst Library, New York University
- 1983 State Historical Society of Wisconsin Library
- 1984 Jackson-George Regional Library System, Pascagoula, Mississippi
- 1985 Birmingham (Alabama) Public Library
- 1986 Martin P. Catherwood Library, Cornell University
- 1987 Lorain (Ohio) Public Library
- 1988 Southern Labor Archives, Georgia State University
- 1989 Citizens Library (Peter G. Sullivan, Director), Washington, Pennsylvania
- 1990 Hennepin County Library, Minnetonka, Minnesota

- 1991 Department of Archives and Special Collections, Ohio University Libraries, Athens
- 1992 National Association of Letter Carriers, Information Center, Washington, D.C.
- 1993 Texas Labor Archives, University of Texas at Arlington
- 1994 Archives of Urban and Labor Affairs, Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University
- 1995 Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries and Butte-Silver Bow Public Archives, Labor History Collection, Butte, Montana
- 1996 Metropolitan Detroit Professionals Library, UAW Local 2200
- 1997 Englewood (New Jersey) Public Library
- 1998 Institute for Industrial Relations Library
- 1999 Libraries for the Future
- 2000 Lodi Memorial Library of Lodi, New Jersey
- 2001 Duane G. Meyer Library, Southwest Missouri State University

REFERENCES

- American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). (2001). Union membership trends. Retrieved January 3, 2001, from <http://www.aflcio.org/union-difference/uniondiff11.htm>.
- AFL-CIO. (2001). Workers' Memorial Day. Retrieved February 4, 2002, from <http://www.aflcio.org/safety/wmd.htm>.
- AFL-CIO/American Library Association Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups. (1989). *Library service to labor: A guide for action*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- American Library Association (ALA). (2001). *American libraries handbook of organization 2001-2002*. Chicago: American Libraries.
- Borden, A. K. (1931, July 1). The sociological beginnings of the library movement. *Library Quarterly*, 1(3), 278-282.
- Bridgeport Public Library. (2001). Bridgeport history. Retrieved January 4, 2001, from <http://www.bridgeporthistory.org>.
- Cayton, M. K., Gorn, E. J., & Williams, P.W. (Eds.). (1993). *Encyclopedia of American Social History*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Ditzion, S. H. (1947). *Arsenals of a Democratic Culture*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- Dwyer, R. E. (1977). *Labor education in the U.S.: An annotated bibliography*. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press.
- Goshin, I. (1941). *Public library cooperation with labor organizations*. Unpublished master's thesis, Columbia University, New York.
- Imhoff, K., & Brandwein, L. (1977). Labor collections and services in public libraries throughout the United States, 1976. *RQ* 17(2), 148-158.
- International Federation of Professional and Electrical Engineers, Local 17 AFL-CIO. (2001). *Local 17 labor and democracy library project* [Announcement]. Seattle, WA: Author. Retrieved March 25, 2001, from <http://www.ifpte17.org/libraryproj.htm>.
- Labor Research Association Online. (2002). Union trends and data. Retrieved February 4, 2002, from <http://laborresearch.org/content3g.html>.
- Lindeman, E. C. (1926). *Workers' education and the public libraries*. New York: Workers Education Bureau.
- Meyers, A. S. (1999). Building a partnership: Library service to labor. *American Libraries*, 30(7), 52-55.
- Oko, D. K., & Downey, B. F. (Eds.). (1963). *Library service to labor*. New York: Scarecrow Press.
- Poll, B. (1953). *Working people and their relationship to the American public library: History and analysis*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Washington, Seattle.

- Rachleff, P. (2001). Retrieved March 6, 2001, from listserv H-Net labor history discussion list: H-LABOR@H-NET.MSU.EDU.
- Schneider, D. W. (1990). Library service to labor groups. In Heim, K. M., & Wallace, D. P. (Eds.), *Adult services: An enduring focus for public libraries* (pp. 283–313). Chicago: American Library Association.
- Soltow, M. J. (1984). Public libraries' service to organized labor: An overview. *RQ* 24(2), 163–168.
- Sullivan, M. A. (1953). *Work of public libraries with trade unions in the United States*. Master's thesis, Catholic University.
- Union Membership Summary in News. (2002, January 17). Bureau of Labor Statistics. Retrieved January 18, 2001, from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.nr0.htm>.
- Vial, D. L. (1997, October 22). Report on Napp explosion released—safety proposals disappoint some. *Bergen Record*, p. A1.

ADDITIONAL READINGS

- Gifford, C. (Ed.). (2000). *Directory of U.S. labor organizations*. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of National Affairs.
- Goodstein, S. (1967). Labor and libraries. In M. L. Bundy (with S. Goodstein) (Eds.), *The library's public revisited*. Student Contribution Series, No. 1. School of Library and Information Services. [College Park]: University of Maryland.
- Sparanese, A. C. (1999). A selected bibliography for a public library labor studies collection. Retrieved February 4, 2002, from <http://www.inglewoodlibrary.org/resources/labor2000.html>.

A Fifty-Five Year Partnership: ALA and the AFL-CIO

ARTHUR S. MEYERS

ABSTRACT

IN 1946, THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION (ALA) established with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) the Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups. Since then, the committee has been a beacon for service to labor, and the link between the organizations has been integral to public learning and beneficial to both unions and libraries. In 1974, the charge became "to initiate, develop, and foster, through the organizational structures of the ALA and the AFL-CIO, ways and means of effecting closer cooperation between librarian and labor organizations." It was also to serve as "a catalyst for libraries and other institutions to enable them more effectively to fulfill the expressed and unexpressed needs of the labor community" and to encourage wider use of libraries. Today, the committee is within the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) and is comprised of nine librarians, appointed by RUSA, and nine representatives from the AFL-CIO, with a cochair from each group. Several aspects of the partnership suggest that it has played an important role in furthering the long tradition of public learning—union leaders speaking strongly about services targeted to labor's needs, developing guidelines for service, establishing the John Sessions Memorial Award to recognize a library or library system for significant work with unions, forging an active publishing program including reading and viewing lists, and presenting and exhibiting material at conferences. The committee's activities reflect a continuum of the value that committed librarians and union leaders have long placed on public learning for labor. The partnership has endured because a renewing group of librarians and union leaders has recognized its importance, and the joint committee is a model for ALA commitment and collaboration.

INTRODUCTION

"If the public library is to play its part in society it must give to labor, as well as to all other groups, the means of comprehending events in our swiftly moving social scene" (Goshkin, 1941, p. 74). This 1941 plea foretells the founding of a remarkable partnership in American library history five years later. In 1946, the American Library Association (ALA) established with the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) the Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups. The 1941 call also suggests a recurring question in the study of public organizations, and that is whether they respond on their own initiative to needs or must be prodded into providing services. In service to labor through the years, a number of public libraries developed special programs although most libraries have not done so. Importantly, over the past half-century, the joint committee has been a beacon for such service. In the longer history of the nation, the library-labor link has been integral to public learning and beneficial to both unions and libraries.¹

PUBLIC LEARNING, LABOR, AND LIBRARIES

Richard D. Brown (1996) has written that, in the mid-eighteenth century, a politically informed citizenry was seen as vital for the state and liberty. The American Revolution helped democratize the new nation, as intellectual life was considered a necessity for people. The nineteenth century saw books and discussions in Workingmen's and People's Institutes and Lyceum and Chautauqua lectures. By participating in this wide range of activities, Americans displayed their commitment to the ideal of an informed, knowledgeable citizenry. At the turn of the twentieth century, clubwomen studied social issues, universities developed extension courses, and social and cultural centers and congregations sponsored lectures, such as the Open Forum. Merle Curti (1951) has argued that the unique characteristic of American intellectual history is that the gulf between the learned and the common people has been less wide and deep than elsewhere.

In the nineteenth century, factory libraries, such as at Pacific Mills in Lawrence, Massachusetts, sought "to elevate and enlighten the minds of these operatives" (Ditzion, 1947, p. 111). With the founding of public libraries and the development of the organized labor movement at midcentury, wider efforts were made to reach working people. The phrase "workingman's university" (Ditzion, 1947, p. 113) is found in early library statements—for example, in Mount Holly, Pennsylvania. By the end of the nineteenth century, some libraries in industrial communities made a genuine contribution toward furthering the education of industrial workers. The library in New Brunswick, New Jersey, was visited almost entirely by factory workers, with the staff determining "by the odors which clung to a book" (Ditzion, 1947, p. 115) the factory where the borrower worked. In South Norwalk, Connecticut, the library was used "exclusively by factory

employees" (Ditzion, 1947, p. 115). Carnegie libraries, a widespread democratizing force in the early twentieth century, were dedicated with the hope "that the masses of workingmen and women . . . would remember that this is their library" (Ditzion, 1947, p. 114).

The other side of the library-labor relationship is that union leaders have long recognized that education and libraries are vital to working people. In 1839, the Philadelphia General Trades Union adopted the Mechanics' Library; other libraries were attached to workingmen's clubs and institutes. Towards the end of the Civil War, labor groups established libraries for their own members, such as railroad conductors in Montgomery, Alabama. At the first meeting of the National Labor Union in 1866, the organization recommended the establishment of free reading rooms. While the groups sought fairness in fundamental economic power and were thus sometimes negative toward tax-supported libraries, they were not oblivious to their value. Unions were early supporters of community libraries; for example, at the turn of the century, each member of the Hagerstown, Maryland, bricklayers' union pledged one free day of work in constructing a new library building.² In Buffalo and other cities, the central union council "agitated" for tax-supported libraries (Soltow, 1984, p. 164). Samuel Gompers, founder of the AFL, recognized that laboring people would gain awareness and education when the eight-hour workday provided leisure to enjoy the "people's university" (Ditzion, 1947, p. 126).

1920S AND 1930S

During the post-World War I period, some librarians came to realize that outreach to unions was part of their educational responsibility, similar to their service to immigrants. In 1921, six librarians were among the 200 persons present at the founding meeting of the Workers' Education Bureau of America, an information center and a publicity organization. The bureau recognized the important role of public libraries in out-of-school learning, identifying the need for governing boards that included "alert, intelligent and purposeful men and women of the laboring classes" (Sullivan, 1963, pp. 15–18). In the 1930s, with union strength growing and the Depression deepening, the unemployed began using libraries on a larger scale. While some library directors became concerned about the unionization of their own employees, others saw the organizations as powerful allies and set up collaborative programs (Sullivan, 1963, p. 13).

In 1939, ALA published profiles of exemplary adult education group work in libraries, beginning with proactive service to unions. Minneapolis assessed its work "unusually successful . . . with plain people of limited education" (Chancellor, 1939, p. 51). The city's labor movement was "coming into power" and the library had an "obligation to gain their confidence and be of service" (Chancellor, 1939, p. 51). Between 1936 and 1939, the staff contacted various workers' groups about books of interest. Special lists

were prepared, with the union printing shop “bug” on them, and displays brought a wide range of resources to workers’ attention. Milwaukee librarians, aware they had not met workers’ educational needs, began “extramural service,” reaching out to a wide range of labor groups. Library staff talked to the central labor council, attended meetings of every union local, placed book collections in some headquarters, and attended the Milwaukee Workers’ College to study labor problems. (Deposit collections in factories, however, were judged not as successful.) The Milwaukee library director concluded there must be “full confidence in the broadminded and impartial attitude of the library” and all sides of controversial issues must be equally available, since “Workers cannot advance themselves individually or advance the collective interest of the group without educational opportunities” (Chancellor, 1939, p. 62).

EARLY 1940S

The services in Minneapolis and Milwaukee, even before the joint committee was established, were not unique. In 1941, five of twelve central labor groups in a survey judged libraries “very cooperative.” The Des Moines librarian “will go out of his way to cooperate with union labor.” Libraries, the study found, play “a much more important role” on workers’ education committees and labor schools. Three union locals responded in the study that “the public library cooperates to the fullest extent.” Eight of thirty-nine libraries reported “active” cooperative programs, while eleven others provided “some” services. The libraries recognized the correlation between positive attitudes and service. In an increasingly totalitarian world, the study concluded, libraries must help labor “participate with intelligence and understanding in the responsibilities [of the age.]” (Goshkin, 1941, pp. 66–74).

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE

In the early 1940s, with the changing socioeconomic climate and war mobilization, librarians saw in unions an ally for their own goals, and began establishing programs targeted to the needs of their members. As the services gained momentum, librarians who were active in the field pressed ALA to establish a steering group to coordinate programs at the national level. In October 1946, the ALA Council established the Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups. The original purpose was to discover “ways of encouraging and assisting public libraries to develop specialized library services which will be useful to labor groups” (Imhoff & Brandwein, 1977, p. 149). In 1974, following an ALA reorganization, a responsibility statement was adopted, with the primary charge “to initiate, develop and foster, through the organizational structures of the ALA and the AFL-CIO, ways and means of effecting closer cooperation between librarian and labor organizations” (*ALA Handbook of Organization*, 1999–2000, pp. 20–21). It was also to serve as “a catalyst for libraries and other institutions to en-

able them more effectively to fulfill the expressed and unexpressed needs of the labor community" (*ALA Handbook of Organization*, 1999–2000, pp. 20–21) and to encourage wider use of libraries. Initially placed under ALA's National Relations Office, then the Adult Services Division and later the Reference and Adult Services Division, the committee today is within the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA). It is comprised of nine librarians, appointed by RUSA, and nine representatives from the AFL-CIO, with a cochair from each group. Placement of the committee within RUSA for administrative purposes aligns it with adult information services in different types of libraries and also with the mission of RUSA to stimulate and support reference and information services to all groups (Retrieved March 11, 2001, from <http://www.ala.org/rusa/2000plan>).

The committee's librarians and union representatives (the latter often labor educators) begin with the recognition of shared ideals and move on to organizational possibilities and realities. They know that in the autonomy of local libraries and unions the national collaboration can only serve as a beacon for service rather than a command to follow. From 1948 to 1970, the committee published the *Library Service to Labor Newsletter*, initially quarterly but later twice yearly. It focused on successful cooperative activities, labor problems with which librarians should be familiar, and committee activities. In the early years of the committee, the members presented programs at ALA conferences on such topics as new developments in labor, how librarians could make contacts with unions, the effective use of film, and the common denominator in service to business and labor.

In 1958, the committee published a *Guide for Developing a Public Library Service to Labor Groups*. The initial run of 2,500 copies was quickly exhausted and it was reprinted. In 1963, Dorothy Kuhn Oko and Bernard F. Downey brought together a number of articles from the newsletter, as well as other publications, in *Library Service to Labor*. The book captured the historical background of the service, labor's information needs, the composition of a good collection, how to publicize the service, and case studies of five libraries that provided strong programs. Three reading lists at the end were targeted separately to beginners in schools and unions, high school and more advanced union students, and college students and union leaders.³

The committee's 1967 publication, *Developing Library Service to Labor Groups*, provided a rationale for having a specialized focus, union contact information for librarians, and descriptions of the varied services that unions and workers might require. Samuel L. Simon, committee chairman, asked librarians to show persistence and understanding and asked union leaders to communicate their information needs. He wrote that both organizations must realize that a continuing effort is required for successful service, and the result of this effort would be beneficial to both partners. The extensive list of resources at the end of the booklet included general reference works, business and labor publications, a list of oth-

er organizations that provided information, labor history and problems, and audiovisual materials.⁴

SERVICES TO LABOR

Despite these early activities of the committee and the exceptional efforts made by several libraries, the general aim of library service was not in this direction. A 1948 survey of twelve libraries in four states showed that only two had more than fifteen titles on labor relations published since 1941. Pamphlet and periodical holdings were judged "spotty," not related to local labor concerns, and, "in most cases, filled with employer and anti-labor material" (Sullivan, 1963, p. 17). The same survey revealed that of 338 library board members in thirty-seven libraries, only ten of the trustees were union members. The large-scale "Public Library Inquiry" after World War II found "not more than a half dozen libraries have made serious efforts to make [union members] library users, and those that have are not encouraged by the results" (Garceau, 1949, p. 121). For the working person, the public library still looks and feels a little "like a rich man's collection" (Garceau, 1949, p. 122). Despite the best intentions, the study noted, some librarians retained "a custodial attitude toward their books and preferred to have them go into homes where they would be respected and cared for" (Garceau, 1949, p. 122).

In addition to unions gaining strength during the war years, libraries advanced their role as builders of public morale in the wider community. The result was that, in the democratic feeling inspired by the crisis, "much of the hostility or coolness toward trade unions was discarded" (Sullivan, 1963, p. 19). In 1943, the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* established the subject heading "Libraries Work with Trade Unions." In 1951, *Library Journal* began a special section of reviews of materials concerning labor, and *Booklist* soon followed suit by creating a similar section (Sullivan, 1963, p. 19). Libraries from Worcester, Massachusetts, to Kansas City, Missouri, provided specialized services to labor. The Akron (Ohio) Public Library was the first to have "Business and Labor" as a department (Sullivan, 1963, pp. 19–20). Dorothy Kuhn Oko, chairman of the joint committee from 1953–60, single-handedly built the outstanding Labor Education Service department in the New York Public Library, reaching a wide network of unions in the state and helping both labor education and libraries serve working people (Soltow, 1984, pp. 165–166). During the postwar period, Akron, Boston, Milwaukee, New York, and Newark became touchstones for other libraries with their targeted services (Soltow, 1984, p. 165). While their approaches varied, the common denominators were book collections in local union headquarters, reference service, collaborative programs, and visits by librarians to unions (Sullivan, 1963, p. 23). These libraries perceived service to unions as part of their mission to serve the total community. In several cities, labor leaders expressed appreciation for the good work be-

ing carried out, although they were skeptical of the largely conservative library boards (Garceau, 1949, p. 122).

PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

But as in any collaboration, problems arose. One librarian, who kept in close touch with the committee from 1953 to 1960 and helped staff their booth at ALA conferences, recalls that "Nobody paid enough attention to them, and they probably included people with more Marxist orientations than there were in ALA as a whole—although all of this was around and after the McCarthy era" (anonymous respondent, personal communication, January 22, 2001). The members "always seemed to be having to prove how important and how unappreciated they were" (anonymous respondent, personal communication, January 22, 2001). Over the years, committee members from both labor and libraries were sometimes frustrated at the organizational structure of ALA, both in the lead times required for scheduling conference programs and the obstacles to gaining approval for service guidelines. A librarian member recalled that, after the committee thought an updating of the guidelines was completed, they learned that formalization required ALA Council approval, "a much . . . more tedious project" (anonymous respondent, personal communication, March 6, 2001). Some committee members perceived (correctly or not) that the problems were due more to antiunion attitudes within ALA than to the bureaucracy of the organization. One librarian representative on the committee was surprised that ALA wanted a collaboration considering attitudes within the organization (anonymous respondent, personal communication, March 27, 2001). On the other hand, several librarian committee members recalled the helpfulness of the RASD and RUSA staff in navigating within ALA and, very importantly, the value of working in a division of the association that served all adult groups (M. F. Hicks, personal communication, February 26, 2001).

In addition to association problems, some conflicts between the partners on the committee emerged over different value systems. In 1948, when the committee began to publish case studies of exemplary service to labor, the premise was that solid models would lead other libraries in the same direction. One model was the Jefferson School of Social Science in New York City, a worker education program that served unions. Unfortunately, the Jefferson School was on the government's list of subversive organizations, and the CIO had just been in a bitter fight with the Communist Party over control of its unions. While labor representatives on the committee did not want any link with the school, the librarian members saw the issue as one of intellectual freedom. After much internal debating within ALA, the case study was published in late 1950 but in a shortened version (Ring, 1985, pp. 287–301).

In later years, other issues arose—for example, responding to labor disputes in individual libraries and to the ALA holding programs in nonunion hotels. Another problem was whether the committee's annual programs

should focus on how libraries could better serve labor groups and workers or, instead, why librarians should join or form unions. The 2001 conference program balanced these concerns by reviewing past service to blue-collar workers and the different information needs of professional workers, including librarians, who are engaged in collective bargaining. Despite such potentially divisive issues, the partnership has endured. Librarian members on the committee remember early labor representatives John A. Sessions and Albert K. Herling were very helpful in resparking the committee after it had been "in the doldrums" for a period. Sessions in particular was judged by a librarian cochair of the committee as "key" in the process, wanting to put more "oomph" in the collaboration, and urging, "let's do more." The labor representatives on the committee paid for conference speakers, printed lists, and created the annual Sessions Award. In more recent years, James A. Auerbach and Anthony Sarmiento have carried out comparable leadership roles from the labor side.

STUDYING LIBRARY SERVICE TO LABOR

The most active period of library outreach to labor was from the 1950s to the mid-1960s, as the committee pressed hard in urging special services. Since the late 1960s, library services to labor have generally declined. In the 1970s, many libraries that had been treating labor as a special group shifted their focus to more pressing needs, such as literacy issues, service for the economically disadvantaged, or ethnic services. In the 1980s, budgets for materials and special services were not adequate and, when budgets were restored in the 1990s, libraries focused on technological development.

In 1967, the joint committee surveyed public libraries with a book budget over \$10,000. Of 306 libraries reporting unions in their area, 156 had contact with these unions, most commonly providing reference service. The initiative for cooperation came from the union in forty-five instances. While many of the libraries working with unions were not familiar with the Joint committee, others who were aware of it did not necessarily have contact with labor (Rogin & Rachlin, 1968, pp. 201–206).

A 1976 committee survey went to public libraries in cities of 10,000 or more having a central labor council. The premise was that special services were more likely to be found in those cities because of a greater need. The responses showed that many libraries were unaware or uncertain about local unions or a central council, and many assumed unions either did not need services or could afford to pay for them. Of 385 libraries responding, only forty-six reported special collections for unions, although others had some materials, while seventeen libraries planned to develop collections. Outreach to unions was done by forty-five libraries, compared with 156 nine years earlier. The number of libraries with staff assigned to the work dropped from twenty-two to fourteen between the surveys, and only twenty-five libraries in 1976 used joint committee materials. But awareness of

unions was growing, as shown by the fact that most of the responding libraries expressed an interest in what labor could do for them, and 177 of the 385 asked for advice, cooperation, or suggestions. Unfortunately, the 1976 survey revealed that, despite twenty-eight years of work by the joint committee, librarians had a surprising amount of mistrust and lack of understanding of unions. While there are many reasons for the decline in service, a British librarian suggested one factor may be that American unions have not been "fully accepted as a necessary part of [the nation's] fabric" (Imhoff & Brandwein, 1977, pp. 149–158). In 1986, a survey of U.S. academic libraries and nontraditional labor studies participants showed a corollary inadequacy in service (Cash & Paar, 1987, pp. 112–126).

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In view of this general lack of commitment by libraries to serve labor, the key question is whether the special services that the joint committee promoted for the past half-century impacted unions or their members in terms of public learning. Several aspects of the partnership suggest that the committee has played an important role in furthering this long tradition in America.

First, union leaders from the beginning have spoken strongly about the positive, participatory results of library services targeted to labor's needs. Through the years, the learning became two-way, with the largely middle-class, intellectually rooted librarians gaining an awareness of workers' concerns, and union leaders in turn coming to see the possibilities of a strong partnership. In 1960, the AFL-CIO published *Your Library Can Serve Your Union*, a nineteen-page booklet targeted to local union leaders on how libraries can help them in carrying out their responsibilities. A similar booklet, *Your Library Can Help Your Union*, was published by the AFL-CIO in 1965. In 2001, Dorothy Shields, the retired AFL-CIO director of education, looked back at the long relationship and concluded that it was positive for both sides and very important for the work of the Education Department: "In many cases librarians really did not have substantive knowledge of the structure or mission of the labor movement. By working with us the libraries gave a credence to the legitimacy of the movement that otherwise was not accepted by librarians [earlier]"; for libraries, "labor was helpful in lobbying for funds . . . both locally and nationally" (D. Shields, personal communication, February 3, 2001). For example, labor representatives testified at the 1979 White House Conference on Libraries and Information Services, eloquently asking for increased cooperation and additional awareness of labor's information needs. Beginning in 1984 and continuing for several years, the AFL-CIO participated in the National Library Week focus as part of ALA's National Partnership program (*ALA Yearbook*, 1980, p. 181; 1985, p. 167). In 1998, the relationship was strengthened by collaboration with the advocacy group Libraries for the Future in promoting national aware-

ness of the need for and good examples of service to labor. At the 1999 ALA Conference, the AFL-CIO executive vice president focused on ALA's key action areas in a speech on "The AFL-CIO and the ALA: A National Partnership for the 21st Century."⁵

Secondly, the joint committee recognized early the practical importance of developing and disseminating guidelines for service to labor beyond meetings and programs at conferences. The implementation of ALA guidelines is up to libraries as individual local institutions, and the work of guideline implementation is never completed merely with publication of these guidelines. But national guideposts do spur a deeper understanding of unserved and underserved areas of library patronage, and guidelines provide concrete ways for planning and carrying out special services.

Drawing on its 1967 publication, *Developing Library Service to Labor Groups*, the joint committee issued *Library Service to Labor Groups: A Guide for Action* in 1975 and again in 1989, in a slightly revised format. The later statement continued the earlier call for librarians to understand the problems and attitudes of unions and urged them to reach out. It also asked labor organizations to become aware of their members' needs and to communicate how libraries can be helpful. As in all partnerships, the guidelines recognized that problems might arise but if both labor and libraries were convinced, they would benefit from the effort, and a rewarding and significant service could develop.

To deepen the impact and awareness of special services to labor, the joint committee developed the John Sessions Memorial Award in 1980. Named after the key labor representative on the committee, the award recognizes a library or library system for significant work with unions. Through the award, a handsome plaque given to the winning library, librarians have become more cognizant of the history and contributions of organized labor. Over the past two decades, the award has identified libraries across the country that have strengthened the library-labor collaboration and have increased awareness of workers' concerns. The public library winners in a cross section of communities have helped find career services for the unemployed and workers considering career changes. Award winners from academic libraries have made union archives more accessible, and special libraries have built a bridge between local union history and the community. The wide range of activities carried out by Sessions winners proves that no single approach characterizes "library service to labor," but that in fact examples of outstanding services can be verified or replicated in different settings. An early winner traces a direct line from a special project in a small library to an ongoing service in a large county system, where information and assistance are provided to a wide range of the employed and unemployed. The career counseling focus of the larger service, writes the librarian, is based on a principle that unions have always known: "There's more to life than work and it was the labor movement that first set the times and

terms of work/life balance, maybe ahead of their time" (M. E. Jaffe, personal communications, March 3 and 5, 2001).

Another important component of public learning has been the promulgation of an active publishing program to disseminate model services and helpful materials. Beginning with the first newsletter in 1948, the joint committee urged librarians to take services to labor groups (*Library Service to Labor Newsletter*, July 1, 1948, p. 2). In the last issue of the newsletter in 1970, the publications program was still strong, as shown in the extensive annotated bibliography on new careers for the disadvantaged. The last issue also noted that 6,000 copies of *A Step by Step Plan* had been printed but, "the number was inadequate for broad distribution" (*Library Service to Labor Newsletter*, Spring 1970, pp. 1-6). This pamphlet succinctly listed first steps for local union officers and librarians to take in seeking to improve service. It also listed several free publications from the committee, including *Labor in America: A Reading List for Young People*. This latter annotated list, aimed at junior and senior high school students, teachers, and librarians, had sections on labor heritage, unions in action, labor and today's issues, automation, biographies, and fiction. In the last issue of the committee's newsletter, in 1970, the revised edition of *Labor, A Reading List* was reported as ready for publication. However, with 10,000 copies of the old edition still available, the committee discussed how they could promote it better. The same issue of the newsletter noted that a *Labor Film List*, with 150 titles, was underway in 1970. These two lists may have been combined in an extensive annotated bibliography, *American Labor: Books, Films, Magazines*, that was published during the year. This booklet listed materials on American labor history, the theory and practice of unionism, industrial relations, labor and today's issues, biographies, and labor magazines and films. In 1979, the committee published a twenty-five-page bibliography, *Labor Today and Yesterday: Selected References, Books, Films and Magazines*. Materials lists—such as *Women Workers Today: Ideas for Change* (1982) and *Workplace Health and Safety* (1983)—were also developed and distributed at ALA conference exhibit booths and programs. Michele C. Russo, a librarian member of the joint committee in later years, assessed the publication activities as the most beneficial outcome of their work, with concrete ideas on why and how libraries could help in serving unions (personal communication, March 2, 2001). Through *RQ*, the journal of the Reference and Adult Services Division, the joint committee described in 1984 how libraries were responding to the information needs of job seekers, and in 1996, what reference resources were meeting the information needs of unions. In 1999 and 2000, the committee's publishing extended to a wider audience with articles in *American Libraries*, *School Library Journal*, and *Booklist*.

Yet another direction of the joint committee has been the development of programs and exhibit booths at ALA conferences, aimed at achieving the communication and practical implementation aspects of public learning.

In 1978 the committee prepared an exhibit of labor trade publications as part of its awareness goal, and in 1979 the conference program was on library-union programming in the humanities. The committee conducted a successful program in 1983 on workplace health and safety that drew 100 people. The program featured an industrial hygienist speaking on health hazards in libraries, and the exhibit booth highlighted union publications on health and safety. (In the fast-changing workplace, labor unions were educating librarians.) In recent years, attracting conference-goers to programs and exhibits, with meetings spread over long distances in a city, is a challenge for all ALA committees. As a consequence, attendance at joint committee programs has suffered, but the presentations have nevertheless been lively and stimulating, often drawing new people into the committee's work. The 1994 program, "Has Workplace Violence Become Part of Your Job?" proved a timely topic, attracting more than 200 persons. The librarian cochair on the committee said the AFL-CIO research in the area was fresh, the speaker offered ideas for further research, and many people came to the open microphone to voice their fears and concerns. The 1997 program on union-supported literacy programs in public libraries was judged a success. In 2000, a lively panel, audience discussion, and distribution of pertinent Web sites highlighted the program, "For Better Salaries and Service: Should ALA Follow the American Medical Association Toward Collective Bargaining?"

LOOKING AHEAD

This overview of the AFL-CIO/ALA Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups reflects a continuum of the value that committed librarians and union leaders and members have long placed on public learning for labor. The fifty-five-year national partnership has endured because a dedicated, renewing group of ALA leaders, librarians, union leaders, and educators have recognized its importance. While the national focus has not been translated into action programs by a large number of libraries on a continuing basis, the joint committee's work shows what can be developed when commitment and collaboration come together. It is a model for other national library partnerships. A new generation of librarians and union educators can ensure it continues.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For assistance in providing information or sharing recollections, special thanks to Cathleen Bourdon, Lawrence Brandwein, Karen Carey, Ginnie Cooper, Jerome Corrigan, Mary F. Hicks, Leslie Hough, Betty Ann Hubbard, Kathleen Imhoff, Martin E. Jaffe, Deborah Schmidle, Joseph F. Lindenfeld, Kate S. Meehan, James J. Oathout, Michele C. Russo, John Schacht, Dorothy Shields, Samuel Simon, Michael Smith, Sarah Springer, Ruby Tyson, Donavan Vicha, and Susan Washington.

NOTES

1. Initially, the two labor organizations were separate but they merged in 1955 (*Dictionary of American History*, 1976, I, pp. 102–103). Some academic, special, and school libraries have also acted strongly in this service area, as shown in the range of libraries which have won the John Sessions Memorial Award for significant service to labor. For a complete list, see http://www.ala.org/rusa/awards/awd_sessions.html (retrieved March 11, 2001).
2. The contribution of the Hagerstown bricklayers was replicated in 1978 by 200 Teamsters who volunteered to move the Allentown, Pennsylvania, Public Library to its new building. The move, involving 210,000 books, was accomplished in four hours using nineteen tractor-trailers (*ALA Yearbook*, 1979, p. 149).
3. Dorothy Kuhn Oko and Bernard F. Downey, comp., *Library Service to Labor* (New York: Scarecrow Press, 1963).
4. *Developing Library Service to Labor Groups*, 1967, 1. The 1958 *Guide* was not found in the ALA Archives.
5. Valuable insight on the perspective of librarians that shape service to labor is found in Leigh Estabrook, "Labor and Librarians: The Divisiveness of Professionalism," *Library Journal* 106(2), January 15, 1981, p. 125–127.

REFERENCES

- AFL-CIO/ALA (RASD) Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups. (1974). Unpublished statement of responsibility.
- ALA *Handbook of Organization, 1999–2000*. (1999). Chicago: American Library Association.
- ALA Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups. (1948, July 1). *Library Service to Labor Newsletter*, 1(1), 1–2.
- ALA Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups. (1970, Spring). *Library Service to Labor Newsletter*, 22(2), 1–6.
- ALA *Yearbook*. (1979). Chicago: American Library Association.
- ALA *Yearbook*. (1980). Chicago: American Library Association.
- ALA *Yearbook*. (1985). Chicago: American Library Association.
- Brown, R. D. (1996). *The strength of a people: The idea of an informed citizenry in America, 1650–1870*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina.
- Cash, D. M., & Paar, J. (1987). Labor education and libraries: A survey of current practices. *RQ*, 27(1), 112–126.
- Chancellor, J. (Ed.). (1939). *Helping adults to learn: The library in action*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- Curti, M. (1951). *The growth of American thought*. (2nd ed.). New York: Harper.
- Dictionary of American history*. (1976). (Rev. ed.). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Ditzion, S. (1947). *Arsenals of a democratic culture: A social history of the American public library movement in New England and the Middle States from 1850 to 1900*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- Garceau, O. (1949). *The public library in the political process: A report of the Public Library Inquiry*. New York: Columbia University.
- Garrison, D. (1979). *Apostles of culture: The public librarian and American society, 1876–1926*. New York: Free Press.
- Goshkin, I. (1941). *Public library cooperation with labor organizations*. Master's thesis, Columbia University.
- Hansen, A. M. (1995). RASD: Serving those who serve the public. *RQ*, 34(3), 314–338.
- Imhoff, K., & Brandwein, L. (1977). Labor collections and services in public libraries throughout the United States, 1976. *RQ* 17(2), 149–158.
- Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups. (1967). *Developing library service to labor groups*. Chicago: American Library Association, Adult Services Division.
- Joseph, D., & Sparanese, A. C. (2000). Reference sources for labor history month. *Booklist*, 96(18), 1778.
- Lee, A. H., & Kuhn, J. (1996). Look out, bosses! Union power's going to get your employees a raise! *RQ*, 36(1), 48–56.
- Lindeman, E. C. (1926). *Workers' education and the public libraries*. New York: Workers' Education Bureau of America.

- Meyers, A. S. (1984). Libraries serve the unemployed. *RQ*, 24(2), 27-31.
- Meyers, A. S. (1995). A bridge to the future: From the Boston Baptist social union to the Beth El open forum. *American Baptist Quarterly*, 14(3), 225-240.
- Meyers, A. S. (1999). Building a partnership: Library service to labor. *American Libraries*, 30(7), 52-55.
- Oko, D. K., & Downey, B. F. (Eds.). (1963). *Library service to labor*. New York: Scarecrow Press.
- Ring, D. F. (1985). Two cultures: Libraries, the unions, and the "case" of the Jefferson School of Social Science. *Journal of Library History*, 20(3), 287-301.
- Rogin, L., & Rachlin, M. (1968). *Survey of adult education opportunities for labor: Labor education in the United States*. Washington, D.C.: American University, National Institute of Labor Education.
- Soltow, M. J. (1984). Public libraries' service to organized labor: An overview. *RQ*, 24(2), 163-168.
- Sparanese, A. C. (2000). What makes America work? *School Library Journal* 45(5), 43-44.
- Sullivan, M. A. (1963). *Work of public libraries with trade unions in the United States*. Unpublished master's thesis, Catholic University of America.

The Information Needs of Local Union Officials

MARGARET A. CHAPLAN AND EDWARD J. HERTENSTEIN

ABSTRACT

A QUESTIONNAIRE WAS DISTRIBUTED to local union officials in a Midwestern state in order to determine the information needs of local union officials and how they go about satisfying those needs. It was hypothesized that the institutional roles (such as negotiator, grievance handler, administrator, organizer, educator, and political worker) or individual roles (such as educational certification, personal problem-solving, writing, and communication) inhabited by these officials would determine the information sources used, whether formal (such as libraries, union research departments, union publications, and databases) or informal (such as personal networks, telephone inquiries, and local office files). It was also hypothesized that training in how to do research would affect the number and diversity of information sources used. Partial support was found for all these hypotheses. While many of the union roles showed similar rates of needs, there were enough differences to support the hypothesis that union role determines information needs. The data also show that the type of information need helps predict the information sources used and thus that union role predicts information source used. Finally, training has a positive effect on the number of information sources used and on the number of formal sources used. Comparisons to previous research are made and suggestions for further research are presented.

INTRODUCTION

The study of the information-seeking behavior of researchers and scholars has a long history; in the case of scientists and engineers, reaching back almost fifty years. User studies in the social sciences and humanities have

almost as long a pedigree, and substantial attention has also been paid to the study of information use by persons in professions such as social work, education, business, and medicine. Only recently has attention begun to shift to investigations of the information-seeking behavior of ordinary citizens in their work or daily life or of persons who have not had training in research or information seeking, although some early studies examined information needs of disadvantaged populations.

User studies have also generally focused on information provision—that is, the nature and variety of collections and services available—or information use—that is, the various types of sources examined—rather than on the information needs for which these sources are consulted. Although published thirty years ago, the statement by Faibisoff and Ely (1971) that “the bulk of studies purporting to examine information needs have in fact evaluated the effectiveness of information delivery systems” (p. 5) is still valid. The purpose for which the information is to be used and how this might affect the nature of the information sources used and the individual’s information-seeking behavior has not generally been investigated, perhaps because, in the case of scholars and professional workers, the intended use appeared relatively obvious.

Studies of information use by union members and officials have followed this same pattern. Beginning with the burgeoning of union membership in the late 1930s and intensified by the establishment of the Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups of the American Library Association (ALA) and the American Federation of Labor (now the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations [AFL-CIO]) in 1945, a series of studies has looked at the collections of labor materials in (mostly) public libraries and the services provided by the libraries to labor groups. These studies are generally surveys of the size and contents of special labor collections in the libraries and the types of reference and outreach services the libraries provide. The paper by Imhoff and Brandwein (1977) is a typical example. Backhouse’s study (1982) is representative of a similar line of investigation in Great Britain.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Little empirical research on local union officials and their information needs has been undertaken. The earliest found (Harper, 1963) was a survey of thirty-nine local union officers who were attending a union leadership training program at the University of Chicago. Among other questions, respondents were asked to rank a list of ten possible public library services in order of their value to the local union and to indicate whether they had used a public library in connection with union work. The service ranked most highly by the officers was providing background information to support collective bargaining. Some union officers said they had used reference materials in the library, had read materials on issues of interest to

unions, and had gathered information to be used in publications or union educational programs.

Labor education program students were also surveyed by Clinton (1983) and Shields (1983). Clinton surveyed 129 shop stewards and safety representatives in three cities of different sizes in England who had participated in Trades Union Congress-sponsored labor education programs. In addition to questions about the use of specific types of materials, Clinton asked respondents to indicate which activities they had been involved in as trade union representatives in the previous year and how they obtained necessary information. In general, the officials sought information about specific and immediate workplace problems and for collective bargaining. Shields (1983) reports, from an earlier study of sixty-seven labor education students in England, that most of their information needs related to collective bargaining and that they required practical, problem-oriented information geared to local conditions.

Bendix (1965) used a combination of interviews and a questionnaire to collect data from 119 union officers and union staff members in New Jersey on their use of public library services. Her questionnaire asked whether the respondents had used specific public library services and what types of services they had requested in connection with their union work. Results indicated that full-time union research directors used the library as a major source for statistical and economic information for collective bargaining and that other union officials indicated using public library resources for political work, workers' education programs, organizing, grievance handling, and preparing union publications.

In his study, Comby (1992) used a questionnaire-based interview format to survey seven union research staff members in three Quebec union federations. He inquired about the type of research they did and the information sources they used. As might be expected, the research staff sought information to be used in collective bargaining, information about government programs and politics, information to be used in testimony before legislative bodies, and information to prepare union policy documents. Each federation had its own library, but the research staff also used other information sources.

Both Steffen (1984) and Rankin (1984) studied the information needs of members of a single union. Steffen (1984) surveyed forty shop stewards who were members of Local 54 of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union. He was not interested in investigating library use but rather in discovering what information the shop steward needed from the union to carry out his or her duties. In general, he found that shop stewards need information to help in communicating, problem-solving, and decision-making in specific workplace situations. Rankin (1984) surveyed eighteen officers and representatives in a single district council branch of the National and Local Government Officers' Association in Eng-

land. The officials cited information needs in ten different topic areas which concerned issues of working conditions, employer actions, and legislation.

These studies were undertaken to examine union officials' awareness of and use of information sources and services, particularly libraries, and the information needs of these officials have had to be inferred from the contents of the questionnaires or summary statements by the author.

THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study diverges from previous research by attempting directly to determine the information needs of local union officials and to examine their behavior in satisfying those needs. It seeks to answer the two-part question, what information do local union officials need to do their jobs as representatives of their members, and where do they get it?

Local union officials, such as local union officers, business agents, and shop stewards, have a variety of roles that involve using information. They may serve as office administrators, negotiators, grievance handlers, educators, organizers, writers and publishers, and problem solvers. The first hypothesis tested in this paper is that local union officials' roles determine their information needs and thus the information sources they use. Specifically:

Hypothesis 1a: Union role determines information needs;

Hypothesis 1b: Information needs determine the information sources used;

Hypothesis 1c: Union role determines the information sources used.

For the purpose of analysis, information needs have been grouped into two categories. The first category is institutional needs, and in this are information needs such as information to be used in collective bargaining, grievance handling, handling of the union's business affairs, planning labor education programs, conducting organizing drives, and political campaign work. The second category is individual needs, and in this are information needs as information to be used in studying for promotion or certification, equivalency exams, and adult education classes; in solving personal problems of union members; in writing articles for union publications; and in communicating between the union and individual members.

Again, for the purpose of analysis, information sources have been grouped into formal sources and informal sources. Formal sources include libraries of all types, research departments at international union headquarters, union publications, online databases, and the Internet. While the Internet contains a large informal component in the form of e-mail and chat rooms, it is probably more likely to be used by local union officials to search for information from Web pages of government and other formal information sources, so it is included in the group of formal information sources. Informal sources include colleagues, telephone contacts, and office files.

Most local union officials have little or no staff and must do the work

themselves or with the assistance of volunteers, and not many of them (in this study a little less than half of all respondents) have had any training in how to find information. A second hypothesis is, thus:

Hypothesis 2: Training in finding information will affect the diversity and number of information sources used.

It is somewhat difficult to capture the concept, "information need." One method often used is to ascertain the specific categories of information needed, such as statistics, or bibliographies, or texts of journal articles. This approach, however, does not reveal the whole story. Although we may know what is requested or used, we still may not know what is needed. This study defines "information need" in terms of the purpose for which the information is to be used. The intended purpose should be a more accurate reflection of need.

METHOD

The data for this study was collected by means of a survey of labor union leaders in a Midwestern state. The mailing list was generated from a database of the names of individuals filing U.S. Department of Labor "Labor Organization Annual Report for Use by Labor Organizations with Less Than \$200,000 in Total Annual Receipts" (LM-3) reports or the names of individuals filing "Labor Organization Annual Report That Must Be Used by Labor Organizations with \$200,000 or More in Total Annual Receipts and Labor Organizations in Trusteeship" (LM-2) reports provided by the Food and Allied Service Trades Department (FAST) of the AFL-CIO. Additional names were generated through Internet searches to add the names of public sector union officials to the list.

Sample

A total of 1,518 surveys was mailed out; 70 were returned for bad addresses, leaving 1,448 good mailings. The usable responses totaled 239. Adjusting for bad addresses, this constitutes a response rate of 17.8 percent. While this is not the optimum response rate, it is in line with response rates for similar surveys involving unions (e.g., Fiorito, Jarley, Delaney, & Kolodinsky, 2000). However, given this rate of response, it is important to consider whether the respondents are significantly different from the population in any meaningful respect.

The respondents were union leaders from throughout the state. The sample was 87 percent male. Over 97 percent of the respondents had at least a high-school education, including 69 percent who had at least some college education. They served in a number of different positions in their unions, including elected officer (94 percent), staff representative/business agent (44 percent), shop steward (25 percent), community relations representative (13 percent), organizer (35 percent), apprenticeship/training

officer (13 percent), and political action officer (26 percent). Many reported serving in more than one capacity so the figures total more than 100 percent. The average number of members in each local union was 239. Bargaining units were only slightly smaller at 234.

Representativeness of the Sample. Table 1 illustrates that, although the response rate was not as high as expected, the sample closely matches the population of labor unions in the United States.

Table 1. Proportion of Union Members in Each Sector of the Economy.

Employer sector	National Proportion*	Sample Proportion
Government	.49	.52
Manufacturing	.21	.19
Construction	.09	.08
Transportation	.13	.08
Trade	.07	.01
Agriculture	.01	.00
Other**	na	.12

*National Data Source, BLS (2001) Union Membership-Annual. (Online) Available: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.toc.htm>.

** The survey allowed respondents to choose "other" for employer sector. National data does not include a response category for "other."

Another characteristic of the sample is the total number of union members represented by the individuals who responded. Although the respondents were from a single Midwestern state, a total of 292,338 individuals were members of local unions whose officials responded to the survey. This is 29.4 percent of the total union membership in the state (BLS, 2001).

Measures

The survey instrument was a six-page questionnaire segmented into these six sections: information needs, Internet use, library use, training, information about the local union, and information about the respondent (see Appendix for text of questionnaire).

Information Needs. The first section asked participants to indicate whether they ever required information to deal with each of ten different areas of responsibility. The survey also asked respondents to indicate how frequently they performed each of these tasks and to rank the relative importance of each of them.

The final part of the first section asked respondents where they got information. Questions in other sections asked whether respondents used libraries or the Internet as a source for information.

Training. The fourth section asked questions about training received by the respondents. This section contained questions about training to do research in general and training in how to use the Internet as a research tool.

One of the questions in this section was a yes/no question as to whether the individual had ever received training, both general and for Internet use.

Information about the Local Union. The fifth section asked the respondents to provide information about their local unions. This was used to determine the representativeness of the sample, as well as to permit analysis of the information needs and information sources by different union characteristics. The questions in this section included questions asking what type of official the respondent was, what sector of the economy the union's members were employed in, the size of the local union and the bargaining unit, and the size of the city/town where the bargaining unit is located.

Information about the Respondent. The final section inquired about characteristics of the individual respondent. Included in this section were questions on gender, population size of residence city/town, and amount of formal education.

Procedure

We used a number of different procedures to answer the questions asked in our hypotheses. First, the demographic data were analyzed to determine whether the sample was representative of the population of interest. We then used this demographic data to statistically control for these characteristics as alternative explanations for the hypothesized relationships. Then, we used separate regressions to examine each hypothesis.

Control Variables. Both individual variables and local union variables were used as control variables. Among the individual variables used were tenure in union office, size of locality of residence, formal education, and gender. Local union variables included the size of the local and the bargaining unit, size of locality of bargaining unit, and economic sector of the employer.

Hypotheses. Different types of analyses were used according to the type of dependent variable used in the hypothesis. For some of the hypotheses, a perusal of frequency tables is all that was possible. Other hypotheses called for an assessment of the relationship between the number of needs or sources and the circumstances and characteristics. For these, the ordinary least squares method was used (Bohrnstedt & Knoke, 1994).

RESULTS

The results of the survey indicated at least partial support for all of the hypotheses we advanced. While many of the union roles showed similar rates of needs, there were enough differences to support our hypothesis that union role determines information needs. Additionally, it can be seen from the data that the type of information need helps predict the sources used. The union role predicts the information sources used according to our analysis. Finally, our data show that training is likely to have a positive effect on the number of information sources used and on the number of formal sources used.

Hypothesis 1a: Union Role Determines Information Need

An examination of the relative proportions of individuals in each union role who reported each of the information needs indicates that there are differences among the needs for each union role. This is shown in Table 2.

For example, shop stewards are less likely to report needing information across most categories, except for contract negotiations and communications. Apprenticeship/training officers report a greater need for newsletter/publication needs than other union roles. As might be expected, political action officers had the greatest need for political campaign information, although community relations officers followed closely behind.

Table 2. Proportion of Individuals in Each Union Role Reporting Each Need.

Role (number in category)	Staff Rep/ Business Agent (105)	Shop Steward (59)	Community Relations (31)	Organizer (84)	Apprenticeship/ Training Officer (31)	Political Action Officer (63)
Need						
Grievance/Arbitration	94.2	100.0	90.3	95.2	95.3	90.5
Contract Negotiations	96.2	88.1	93.5	96.4	100.0	87.3
Promotions/GED	38.5	23.7	45.2	41.7	51.6	45.2
Personal Problems	87.5	78.0	83.9	82.1	80.6	84.1
Newsletters/Publications	84.8	64.4	80.6	84.5	96.8	77.8
Business Affairs	96.2	91.5	96.8	97.6	93.3	98.4
Labor Education	76.2	54.2	64.5	78.6	74.2	74.6
Organizing Drive	83.7	52.5	77.4	86.9	96.8	82.5
Political Campaign	81.7	66.1	87.1	82.1	77.4	88.9
Communication with Members	90.4	91.5	93.5	94.0	90.3	93.7

Number in categories adds to more than 239 due to multiple responses.

Hypothesis 1b: Information Need Determines Information Source

We split information needs into two types, institutional and individual. Information to run the business affairs of the union is institutional, while information to assist a member with personal problems is individual in nature. Other institutional needs include contract negotiations, grievances and arbitrations, labor education programs, organizing drives, and political campaigns. Individual needs include information for promotion or certification, information to assist in writing for newsletters and publications, and information to aid communication with individual members.

Likewise, we divided information sources into two categories, formal and informal. Formal sources include libraries of all types, international union research departments, union publications, databases, and the Internet. Informal sources included asking people you know, phoning people or organizations, and examining files at the local union office.

Based on the hypothesis, we expect to find that institutional needs lead to individuals using formal sources. The results of the regression are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Regression of Institutional Need on Formal Source.

Variable	B	SE	t	F	R ²
Constant	3.530***	.249	14.157	27.272	.327
Institutional Need	.266***	.051	5.222		

Dependent Variable: Number of formal sources used; Independent variable: Number of institutional needs reported

* = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .01$; *** = $p < .001$

The mean number of formal sources used by individuals is about 3.5. The regression indicates that for each additional institutional need reported, individuals use approximately one-quarter more formal sources. Additionally, we can see that institutional need accounts for about one-third of the variance in the use of formal sources.

Hypothesis 1c: Union Role Determines Information Source

This hypothesis was partially supported by the results of the survey. While for some information sources there was a difference in the level of use between union roles, for other sources the usage was similar across union roles. This is seen in Table 4.

Table 4. Proportion of Individuals in Each Union Role Reporting Each Source Used.

Role (number in category)	Staff Rep/ Business Agent (105)	Shop Steward (59)	Community Relations (31)	Organizer (84)	Apprenticeship/ Training Officer (31)	Political Action Officer (63)
Source						
Library at Int'l Union	63.5	54.2	56.7	57.8	70.0	61.9
Research Dept at Int'l Union	77.9	59.3	66.7	72.3	73.3	80.9
People You Know	93.3	93.2	96.7	94.0	86.7	98.4
Phoning Organizations	91.3	89.8	96.7	91.6	90.0	95.2
Union Publications	93.0	91.4	100	92.8	90.0	93.7
Local Union Files	97.1	89.7	93.3	94.0	93.3	95.2
Database Subscribed to	47.1	44.8	50.0	51.8	56.6	46.0
Internet	74.0	76.3	80.0	83.3	83.3	77.8
Library	51.0	66.1	60.0	58.3	58.1	61.9

Number in categories adds to more than 239 due to multiple responses.

Shop stewards use the library at the international union less than anyone else, and apprenticeship/training officers use it more than individuals in other union roles. However, shop stewards use libraries (including public and university) more often than individuals in other roles. Staff representatives/business agents use libraries the least.

A regression of union roles on the use of formal sources indicates that staff representatives/business agents and organizers use significantly more formal sources than do individuals in other union roles. This is seen in Table 5.

Table 5. Regression of Union Role on Formal Source.

Variable	B	SE	t	F	R ²
Constant	4.207***	.134	31.303	4.719	.114
Staff Rep/Business Agent	.345*	.182	1.896		
Shop Steward	.352*	.197	1.790		
Community Relations	.022	.274	.080		
Organizer	.449**	.199	2.259		
Apprenticeship/Training	.143	.271	.527		
Political Action Officer	.343	.219	1.566		

Dependent Variable: Number of formal sources used; Independent variable: Union role reported

* = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .01$; *** = $p < .001$

Staff representatives/business agents use slightly one-third of a formal source more on average than do individuals in other union roles. Organizers use nearly one-half of a formal source more than other individuals do. The union role explains about 11 percent of the variance in the use of formal sources.

Hypothesis 2: Training Determines Number and Diversity of Sources

The analysis of the survey indicates support for this hypothesis. This is shown in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6. Regression of Training on Total Sources.

Variable	B	SE	t	F	R ²
Constant	7.260***	.157	46.174	18.606	.073
Training	.962***	.223	4.313		

Dependent Variable: Number of sources used; Independent variable: Training in research reported

* = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .01$; *** = $p < .001$

Table 7. Regression of Training on Formal Sources.

Variable	B	SE	t	F	R ²
Constant	4.415***	.115	37.908	16.415	.066
Training	.672***	.166	4.052		

Dependent Variable: Number of formal sources used; Independent variable: Training in research reported

* = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .01$; *** = $p < .001$

The average number of total sources used by the untrained individual is a little more than seven. According to the regression of training received on number of total sources, an individual who reported having been trained

in research uses nearly a full source more on average than do individuals without training.

Additionally, trained individuals use more formal sources than do untrained individuals. The average number of formal sources used by untrained individuals is about four and one-half, while those trained use about two-thirds of a source more.

DISCUSSION

It is perhaps not surprising to find that an individual's role in the union determines whether there is an institutional or individual information need and similarly, this determines the information source used, whether formal or informal. Nor is it unexpected to find that training in how to do research has an effect on how an individual searches for information.

Comparisons to Studies of Trade Unionists

Roles. Other studies of unionists, while not using empirical methods, have reported similar findings. Rankin (1984) found some evidence that NALGO representatives' approach to information differed according to their job classification, length of service in union office, the bargaining structure and the union structure, their perception of themselves as administrator or activist, and their personality and gender. Bendix (1965), too, found that information sources used were related to organizational characteristics—such as bargaining structure, union structure, and the existence of a union research department—and to personal characteristics, such as educational attainment and personal motivation.

Sources. The use of various types of libraries reported in other studies was, in some cases lower, and in some cases similar, to the usage found in this study (see Table 4). Bendix (1965) reports that twenty-nine persons in her study (about 24 percent) had used the public library for union work. Of Clinton's (1983) respondents, 37.1 percent had used a public library, 11 percent a college library, and 20 percent a union library or research department. Harper (1963) found that 46 percent of her respondents had used libraries in the course of their union work. Rankin (1984) reports that only 17.7 percent of his respondents had used the public library. Shields (1983) does not report an exact figure, but states that few unionists in his study ever used libraries for union work.

Bendix (1965), Clinton (1983), Comby (1992), and Rankin (1984) also found that the use of other formal sources, such as union research departments, union publications, and databases, was low. Rankin observes that, not only were formal sources less used, but they were more likely to be found inadequate.

This study found a definite preference for use of informal information sources, regardless of union role (see Table 4). The percentages for use of personal networks (which ranged from 86.7 percent to 98.4 percent), tele-

phone inquiries (which ranged from 89.8 percent to 96.7 percent), and local office files (which ranged from 89.7 percent to 97.1 percent), were the highest of any information source in our study except for union publications.

While Clinton's (1983) study concentrated on formal and printed sources, he also found indications that less formal sources were used by his respondents and they were reluctant to use nonverbal forms of communication. Comby's (1992) researchers found oral information sources very important, especially their personal networks and the unionists and workers directly involved in the subject of their research. Shields (1983), too, found that oral communication was important in information seeking, and his respondents, as reported in Rankin (1984), preferred informal to formal sources by a ratio of six to four. Rankin himself found that the NALGO representatives overwhelmingly preferred informal sources, particularly interactive informal sources and people. Furthermore, without exception, the representatives relied on previous search patterns and existing personal networks, which consisted mainly of contacts with past or present coworkers or with other union representatives. Of Rankin's respondents, 58.7 percent used people as sources and 41.3 percent used formal sources. Rankin characterizes their information-seeking behavior as a preference for least effort over maximum return.

Training. This study found that about 49 percent of our respondents had had training in research and that training has an impact on the number of information sources used. No comparable evidence is presented in other studies. Clinton's (1983) and Harper's (1963) samples were selected from unionists who had attended union-sponsored training programs, but no indication is given as to what kind. Only 27.8 percent of the NALGO representatives in Rankin's (1984) study had had union training of any kind.

Comparisons to Studies of Public Library Use

Studies of public library use by the general population show a somewhat lower usage than by the trade unionists in this study. A study done for the National Center for Education Statistics (Collins & Chandler, 1997) found that about 44 percent of the households surveyed included individuals who had used the public library, while library use by unionists in this study ranged from 51 percent to 66.1 percent. Among the purposes for which the public library was used, only two are comparable in any way with needs identified in this study. In 20 percent of the households, an individual went to the public library to get information for personal use, such as for consumer or investment issues, and in eight percent of the households an individual used the library for a work assignment or to keep up to date at work. These purposes might be considered roughly analogous to the needs characterized in this study as "information for solving personal problems of union members" and the need for information for contract negotiations or grievance handling.

Comparisons to General Studies of Information-Seeking Behavior

The information-seeking behavior of local union officials is similar to that found in studies of scholars and other information users. Repeatedly, researchers have found that people use information sources that are the easiest to use and the most accessible; they follow search patterns that they have used before, even if unsuccessfully; they are unaware of potential information sources and how to find them; and they prefer oral information sources. In addition, individual differences in educational level and personality can influence information-seeking behavior. Individual information seeking fans out in concentric circles from the sources immediately at hand, through those close by, to those which involve an effort to use. Even persons highly trained in research first consult their personal resources, colleagues, and their social networks before turning to formal information sources.

What does this mean for information providers? First, providers should consider possible ways to tailor information services to the roles of local union officials. This might be done through surveys such as the one used in this study. Also, keeping in mind the importance of informal and oral information sources to local union officials, providers should attempt to ensure that these sources have accurate, timely, and authoritative information. This might be done through vigorous information dissemination programs or training programs. Second, for those local union officials whose roles involve a heavy use of formal information sources, information providers should facilitate training in how to do research.

Further Research

Backhouse (1982), in his recommendations, calls for a detailed study of trade union information requirements, especially at the local level. This study has only touched on one aspect. There is no general study of information needs and flows within unions. The Internet has already had an impact on union information dissemination and on unionists' information seeking, and this issue deserves more thorough investigation. Further research into information needs and priorities and the factors related to incentives and barriers to unionists' use of libraries, the Internet, and other information sources may shed light on the ways information services and providers within and outside the labor movement can help meet the information needs of local union officials.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to thank Joseph Wilson for his assistance in coding the survey questionnaires, and also to thank the local union officials who participated in the survey.

APPENDIX: INFORMATION NEEDS OF UNIONS SURVEY

Section 1: Your Information Needs

1. There are many kinds of information that a union officer or activist might need. Below is a list of many of them. For each please answer these two questions:

- a. Do you ever *need* this kind of information?
b. (IF YOU DO NEED IT): How *often* do you need it?
(IF NEED):

Type of information	a. Ever need?		b. How often?				
	Yes	No	Every day	Once a week	2-6 times a year	Once a year	Less than once a year
(1) Information to be used in contract negotiations	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
(2) Information to be used in handling grievances or arbitrations	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
(3) Materials to be used to study for promotion or certification, or for high school equivalency exams, adult education classes	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
(4) Information for solving personal problems of union members	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
(5) Information to be used for writing articles, newsletters, or union publications	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
(6) Information to be used in handling the business affairs of the union	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
(7) Information for planning labor education programs	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
(8) Information to be used in an organizing drive	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
(9) Information for political campaign work	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
(10) Information to help you communicate between the union and individual members	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
(11) Other	1	2	1	2	3	4	5

(PLEASE DESCRIBE) _____

1c. Rank the following information needs from 1 to 11. 1 is most important, 11 is least important. Please use each number only once.

- _____ Information to be used in contract negotiations
- _____ Information to be used in handling grievances or arbitrations
- _____ Materials to be used to study for promotion or certification, or for high school equivalency exams, adult education classes
- _____ Information for solving personal problems of union members
- _____ Information to be used for writing articles, newsletters, or union publications
- _____ Information to be used in handling the business affairs of the union
- _____ Information for planning labor education programs
- _____ Information to be used in an organizing drive
- _____ Information for political campaign work
- _____ Information to help you communicate between the union and individual members
- _____ Other

(PLEASE DESCRIBE) _____

2. Do you get information . . .

	Yes	No
a. From the library at international union headquarters?	1	2
b. From the research department at international union headquarters?	1	2
c. By asking people you know?	1	2
d. By phoning people or organizations that you think can help?	1	2
e. By looking through union publications?	1	2
f. From files at the local union office?	1	2
g. From a database that you or the union subscribe to?	1	2
(Examples include Lexis/Nexis, BNA, FAST)		
h. From some other source?	1	2

(PLEASE DESCRIBE) _____

Section 2: Internet Use

3. Do you get information from the Internet?

Yes No

4a. Where do you get access to the Internet?

Home	Work	Union office	Public library	Other
1	2	3	4	5

(IF OTHER, PLEASE DESCRIBE) _____

4b. What type of Internet provider do you use?

Local service provider	National service provider (e.g., AOL, MSN)	Union network	Cable company	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5

5a. Is the information you currently get from the Internet something you used to get from a different source?

Yes No

5b. Where did you get it before?

(PLEASE DESCRIBE) _____

6a. In general, how satisfied have you been with the information you have obtained from the Internet?

Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
1	2	3	4	5

6b. What problems have you encountered with using the Internet? (Circle all that apply.)

- Too much information 1
- Information too theoretical 2
- Information not useful 3
- Information not in order of relevance 4
- Information out of date 5
- Information source hard to use 6
- I would have to pay to get the information I needed 7
- I did not find all the information I needed 8
- Too costly 9
- Connection too difficult 10
- Hardware problems 11
- Software problems 12
- Hard to get computer time 13
- Other 14

(IF OTHER, PLEASE DESCRIBE) _____

Section 3: Library Use

7a. Do you get information from a library?

Yes No

7b. What type(s) of library? (Circle all that apply.)

Public	Community college	College	University	Other
1	2	3	4	5

(IF OTHER, PLEASE DESCRIBE) _____

8a. In general, how satisfied have you been with the information you have obtained from the libraries?

Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
1	2	3	4	5

8b. What problems have you encountered with using a library? (Circle all that apply.)

- Information too theoretical 1
- Information not useful 2
- Information was out of date 3
- The material was presented from management's point of view 4
- The information sources were hard to use 5
- Too much information 6
- I was referred elsewhere 7
- The library staff was not helpful 8
- I would have to pay to get the information I needed 9
- I did not find all the information I needed 10
- Other reason 11

(PLEASE DESCRIBE) _____

9. How could libraries be more useful to you? (Circle all that apply.)

- Answer reference questions over the telephone 1
- Contact union officials to find out their needs 2
- Develop or provide access to specialized labor databases 3
- Do the research for you and deliver the results to you 4
- Answer reference questions by e-mail 5
- Offer public Internet access 6
- Have a special section for labor materials 7
- Have more information on local businesses and industries 8
- Buy more labor books and union publications 9
- Provide an alerting service on new items of interest to labor 10
- Distribute better publicity about library services and collections 11
- Have better buildings and equipment 12
- Have longer hours 13
- Offer workshops on how to find information 14
- Other 15

(PLEASE DESCRIBE) _____

10. If the library offered specialized services, would you be willing to pay a fee to access these services?

Yes No

11a. Do you have a card to use your local public library?

Yes No

11b. How often do you use a library?

Once a week 1	Once a month 2	A few times a year 3	Once a year 4	Less than once a year 5	Never 6
---------------------	----------------------	----------------------------	---------------------	-------------------------------	------------

Section 4: Training

12a. Have you ever had training in how to do research or find information?

Yes No

12b. Who provided this training? (Circle all that apply.)

International union 1	College or university 2	Labor education program 3	Central labor body 4	Other 5
-----------------------------	-------------------------------	---------------------------------	----------------------------	------------

(IF OTHER, PLEASE DESCRIBE) _____

12c. How helpful did you find it?

Very helpful 1	Somewhat helpful 2	Neither helpful or unhelpful 3	Somewhat unhelpful 4	Very unhelpful 5
----------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------------------	----------------------------	------------------------

12d. How many hours of training did you receive? _____ hours

12e. If you received training was it a class dealing solely with research?

Yes No

12f. If you have not received training, how helpful do you think it would be?

Very helpful 1	Somewhat helpful 2	Neither helpful or unhelpful 3	Somewhat unhelpful 4	Very unhelpful 5
----------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------------------	----------------------------	------------------------

13a. Have you ever had training in how to use the Internet to find information?

Yes No

13b. Who provided this Internet training? (Circle all that apply.)

International union 1	College or university 2	Labor education program 3	Central labor body 4	Other 5
-----------------------------	-------------------------------	---------------------------------	----------------------------	------------

(IF OTHER, PLEASE DESCRIBE) _____

13c. How helpful did you find the training?

Very helpful 1	Somewhat helpful 2	Neither helpful or unhelpful 3	Somewhat unhelpful 4	Very unhelpful 5
----------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------------------	----------------------------	------------------------

13d. How many hours of training did you receive? _____ hours

13e. If you received training was it a class dealing solely with the Internet?
Yes No

13f. If you did not receive Internet training, how helpful do you think it would be?

Very helpful	Somewhat helpful	Neither helpful or unhelpful	Somewhat unhelpful	Very unhelpful
1	2	3	4	5

Section 5: Information About Your Union

14a. How long have you been a member of your union? ____ years

14b. Circle all that apply yes no (IF YES):

- a. Are you now any type of elected or appointed officer in your union? 1 2 For how many years? ____ years
- b. Are you now a staff representative or business agent? 1 2 For how many years? ____ years
- c. Are you now a shop steward? 1 2 For how many years? ____ years
- d. Are you now a community relations or counseling representative? 1 2 For how many years? ____ years
- e. Are you now an organizer? 1 2 For how many years? ____ years
- f. Are you now an apprenticeship and training officer? 1 2 For how many years? ____ years
- g. Are you now a political action officer? 1 2 For how many years? ____ years

14c. What type of employer does your local bargain with?

- Government 1
- Manufacturing 2
- Construction 3
- Transportation 4
- Trade 5
- Agriculture 6
- Other 7

(IF OTHER, PLEASE DESCRIBE) _____

14d. How many members are in the local? ____ members

14e. How many are in the bargaining unit? ____ members

14f. What is the size of the city/town where the bargaining unit is located?

- | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| City of over 1.5 million | City of 50,000—1.5 million | Area of less than 50,000 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 |

Section 6: Information About You

15a. What is the size of the city/town where you live?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| City of over
1.5 million | City of 50,000—
1.5 million | Area of less
than 50,000 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 |

15b. What is your gender?

- Male Female

15c. How much formal education have you had?

- | | | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Some
high school | High school
graduate or GED | Some
college | College
graduate | Graduate
degree |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Thank you for completing this survey.

REFERENCES

- Backhouse, R. (1982). *Information services for trade unionists*. Buckden, Cambridgeshire: ELM Publications.
- Bendix, D. (1965). *Labor unions and public library service*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Columbia University.
- Bohrnstedt, G. W., & Knoke, D. (1994). *Statistics for social data analysis*, 3rd edition. Itasca, IL: F. E. Peacock Publishers.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2001). *Union membership-annual*. Retrieved June 25, 2002, from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.toc.htm>.
- Clinton, A. (1983). *Libraries and trade unionists: A report on needs and provision in public libraries and elsewhere*. London; Wetherby, West Yorkshire: Publications Section, British Library Lending Division.
- Collins, M. A., & Chandler, K. (1997). *Use of public library services by households in the United States: 1996*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, National Center for Education Statistics.
- Comby, M. (1992). Les besoins et les habitudes documentaires des chercheurs des trois centrales syndicales au Quebec. *Documentation et Bibliothèques*, 38(3), 163–168.
- Faibisoff, S. G., & Ely, D. P. (1971). Information and information needs. *Information Reports and Bibliographies*, 5(5), 2–16.
- Fiorito, J., Jarley, P., Delaney, J. T., & Kolodinsky, R. W. (2000). Unions and information technology: From Luddites to cyberunions? *Labor Studies Journal*, 24(4), 3–34.
- Harper, S. (1963). Local union leaders view library service. In D. K. Oko and B. F. Downey (Eds.), *Library service to labor* (pp. 39–42). New York: Scarecrow Press.
- Imhoff, K., & Brandwein, L. (1977). Labor collections and services in public libraries throughout the United States, 1976. *RQ*, 17(2), 149–158.
- Rankin, N. (1984). *Information and the trade union representative*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Warwick, Coventry, England.
- Shields, M. (1983). Trades unionists: A new challenge to library education. *Education Libraries Bulletin*, 26(1), 39–43.
- Steffen, R. A. (1984). *A study of the informational needs of Local 54, Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union AFL-CIO shop stewards*. Unpublished manuscript, Rutgers University, Labor Education Department.

The Evolution of Research and Information Services at the American Federation of Teachers

F. HOWARD NELSON AND BERNADETTE BAILEY

ABSTRACT

TECHNOLOGY HAS ENABLED RESEARCHERS in unions, trade groups, and professional organizations to shift in focus toward using information and away from collection and distribution. The expansion of the Internet and online database services, combined with powerful computers and software, is behind the shift to primary research (using information) at the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). Areas of greatest impact include improved access to data and vastly improved distribution of union-related research. The dominance of accessibility over quality has given union research more visibility, but it has also increased the exposure of antilabor and antiteacher forces. Easy access to electronic information enabled many AFT departments and staff to continue to do their own research. The Research and Information Services Department itself plays a significant role in promoting cost-efficiency as a coordinator of database access. As can be expected, the cost of access to networked information has outpaced the growth in both AFT staff and the rate of inflation combined, while the number of library personnel has remained constant.

THE EVOLUTION OF RESEARCH AND INFORMATION SERVICES AT THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

Unlike our nation's great universities, where libraries and information technology support scholarship and teaching as the central mission of the university, the library and research functions of a labor union generally work toward a much more practical end: helping elected leaders of the union and staff serve union member locals and organize new ones. At the American Federation of Teachers, technology has taken research and informa-

tion services in slightly different directions. More powerful computer hardware, as well as better access to data and the Internet, have enabled researchers to participate more directly in the political and intellectual debates over the public institutions in which AFT members work. Technology enabled information services to become more efficient by providing services to a growing national headquarters without expanding staff. Financial resources devoted to both research and information services have grown more rapidly than the union itself.

This article identifies several familiar themes regarding research and information services. In both areas, the emphasis has shifted from collecting and distributing information to knowing where to get information and, in the case of research, how to use it. Researchers in unions, trade groups, and professional organizations are now able to focus more on using information or data (primary research) in addition to the traditional focus on collecting data and information (secondary research). Information services now does much of what union researchers did a decade ago regarding the collection and distribution of "other people's" research. Although the ease of access to electronic information allowed many AFT staff and departments to acquire information on their own, the attendant costs of this information have increased rapidly. In order to improve efficiency, information services now play a growing role in managing database accounts and coordinating training from vendors across departmental lines.

When studying the evolution of the information services or the function of research in modern labor unions, it is often difficult to distinguish between cost-savings enabled by technology and general financial cutbacks due to a declining membership base. The American Federation of Teachers, however, is a relatively new member of the labor movement and a growing union. This article begins with a short history of the AFT and its information services and research functions. The subsequent section outlines the evolution of the research department, primarily with respect to the impact of technology. Then, information services are analyzed in a similar way with a focus on budget trends.

AFT HISTORY: IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND INFORMATION SERVICES

Teacher unionism has a short, but storied existence.¹ In 1916, with the support of the famous educator and common school advocate John Dewey, the AFT was formed, subsequently joining the American Federation of Labor.² Early leaders included Margaret Haley in Chicago, Florence Rood in St. Paul, and Mary Barker in Atlanta (O'Connor, 1995). Public employees, however, failed to share in the rights of the rest of the union movement when the labor movement was formally legitimized in the Wagner Act of 1935 (Nelson, 1990).

The two-year period from June 1960 to June 1962 was probably the most

exciting moment in teacher unionism. In November 1960, 5,000 of New York City's 50,000 teachers staged a one-day strike under the leadership of the charismatic Albert Shanker, who later served as president of the AFT from 1974 to 1997. A shortage of teachers coupled with the powerful labor presence in New York City led to the recognition of collective bargaining. An affiliate of the AFT, the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) won the subsequent collective bargaining election (Brooks, 1967). In June 1962, the UFT negotiated the most important collective bargaining agreement for teachers in the United States.³ At that time New York City employed more teachers than the eleven smallest states in the United States combined.

The events in New York City ultimately led to more and more teachers demanding the right to bargain, and in many cases strikes ensued in order to gain collective bargaining recognition. A majority of teachers, however, belonged to the much larger National Education Association (NEA). During the early 1960s, the NEA opposed collective bargaining, but by the early 1970s it, too, supported the concept of "professional negotiations."

The frequent strikes for the purpose of gaining bargaining rights led nearly forty states to individually adopt public sector collective bargaining legislation, thus paralleling the enactment of the National Labor Relations Act in 1935. Like the U.S. education system itself, the legal conditions affecting collective bargaining vary in each of the fifty states. The state legislatures determine whether or not teachers may bargain and what they can bargain over. Approximately 70 percent of teachers work under collective bargaining agreements (Nelson, Rosen, & Powell, 1996). In recent years, AFT membership has grown most rapidly in the areas of higher education, state employees, healthcare, and school support personnel. Elementary and secondary teachers make up slightly more than half of the AFT. About three in four unionized teachers belong to the NEA, which is still not formally a part of organized labor under the aegis of the AFL-CIO. In recent years, the NEA and AFT have considered a merger and the two unions continue to work cooperatively on many projects.

The history of the research and information services functions in the AFT is much shorter than that of the AFT as a whole. In the heady days of organizing city after city into collective bargaining units in the late 1960s and 1970s, organizers created the fictitious Dr. Rock to provide research to back up the first contracts. The organizers themselves conveyed contracts and salary settlements from one city to the next. A research department and a library represented some of the many services needed to both help the AFT continue to organize and to provide services for the rapidly growing union. Furthermore, the growing AFT needed to provide services to local unions that had been organized or newly affiliated with the AFT.⁴

By 1985, the library staff amounted to one professional who circulated newsletters, journals, and trade publications to the desks of staff in the national office, kept a small reference library, and managed one of the

original computerized databases. The dial-in modem was still a novelty and lent credibility to the skillfully conducted and expensive searches. After circulating to staff, journals were shelved for about a year and then stored or discarded. In 1991, information services spent only about \$8,000 on databases. Most departments (e.g., research, educational issues) kept their own small libraries, and some departments subscribed to their own databases such as StateNet, or econometric forecasting services such as DRI, WEFA, or economy.com.

As in most public and private sector unions, the department of research in 1985 focused primarily on collective bargaining issues such as salaries, contracts, and budgets. Salary surveys have provided a research focus for fifty years. The first forty-eight-state salary survey was conducted in 1949 and produced intermittently through the next three decades. By 2001, however, the fifty-state teacher salary survey (Nelson, Drown, & Gould, 2001) had grown into an analytical Internet document viewed by over 30,000 users a month. Other research activities involved direct work with locals and state federations in support of collective bargaining and organizing. The research department served as a conduit between local unions and the published research of government agencies, universities, and think tanks. An important part of a researcher's job was to read professional publications, gather information at meetings, and contribute to a vertical file. The Rolodex of telephone numbers networked union researchers. Like information services, some research at the AFT was and still is conducted by staff outside the research department, in such departments as educational issues, government relations, and organizing.

IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON UNION RESEARCH

Prior to the technology revolution that gained momentum in the mid-1980s, research departments in unions and other trade or professional organizations were primarily departments of "other people's research," though some primary research was conducted. Timely and convenient access to research libraries at universities was limited. Government electronic data were available only on big reels of magnetic tape that required mainframe computers and a great deal of technical help. Graduate students at universities were in much better shape to conduct primary research than most union researchers.

Technology changed the possibilities, even before the Internet. Personal computers and spreadsheet software made the first big difference. Instead of just collecting and publishing salary data, for example, it became possible to easily sort data, identify trends, and compute averages or ratios. Equally important, desktop publishing capabilities enabled the preparation of reports containing graphs, charts, and tables, thus short-circuiting the time-consuming and expensive tasks of professional layout and traditional publishing. This new capacity to analyze data also began to change collective bargaining. As

reliance on strikes to settle labor disputes dwindled, technology helped local unions become less dependent on management for the analysis of data used in bargaining. Unions could cost out proposals themselves, analyze budgets, and make better decisions about their bargaining proposals and the fiscal capacity of the employer to support the union package.

As computing power increased, the capacity of data storage technologies (hard drives, CDs, etc.) escalated. Powerful database and statistical software became easier to use. Those developments made it possible for small research offices to conduct research with the technical sophistication once reserved for universities and big commercial think tanks. AFT researchers now regularly publish articles in academic journals, present research papers at professional meetings, and even conduct government-funded research.⁵

The impact of the Internet on AFT research has been no less profound than its impact on any other labor organization, trade group, or professional organization. Many of these impacts are described elsewhere in this edition of *Library Trends*. Four impacts deserve special attention:

- *Improvement in access to data.* Increasingly, data are stored on servers connected to the Internet. Much of the data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Bureau of Economic Analysis, for example, is not only downloadable, but custom data sets can be created through online database software. Other examples of data important to the AFT are school report cards and student testing data on the Web sites of state departments of education.
- *Dramatic increases in the distribution of union research.* Many of the contracts that union organizers once carried from city to city in the early days of teacher collective bargaining—just thirty years ago—are on the Internet, available to anyone with Internet access. The most copies of the AFT fifty-state salary survey ever printed totaled about 1,500, while the Internet posting of the PDF version of the 2001 survey is expected to be “viewed” 650,000 times.
- *Dominance of research accessibility over research quality.* Perhaps the most profound impact of the Internet on a small research office is not its role in getting information into the office but, instead, it is the Internet’s usefulness in getting information out to members, other researchers, and the public. Only five or six years ago, most research was distributed through ponderous government print publications and peer-reviewed journals held in libraries.
- *Magnified the problems of antilabor and antiteacher research.* All of the opportunities available to unions are also available to antilabor organizations. Analyzing and preparing responses to opposition research has become an important component of union research.

Librarians and teachers are familiar with the issues raised by the democratization of information distribution (Ojala, 1998; Kassler, 2001), but the

effectiveness and the cost-efficiency of distributing information via the Internet has contributed to the shift to primary research. As college students have left libraries to find information online (Carlson, 2001), union-produced research has gained a new audience hungry for resources posted on the Internet. The potential impact of small research offices, such as union research offices, has grown at the cost of research published in books and peer-reviewed journals typically housed in large university libraries. Frequently, scholarly research is listed on the Internet as a working paper, but when published, copyright laws take the research out of wide circulation.

EVOLUTION IN INFORMATION SERVICES

In the mid-1990s, information services (the library) became a part of the AFT's research department. In part, the move reflected a growing commonality of function around the theme of collecting and distributing information. In part, it reflected the technology-driven shift in research emphasis from secondary to primary research and the growth of information services as a supplier of secondary research. Financial retrenchment certainly was not behind the merger. Unlike most other labor unions, the AFT had grown nearly continuously since 1960. Membership increased by 50 percent from about 800,000 members in 1990 to about 1.2 million in 2001. National staff grew by about one-third between 1993 and 2001.

The number of staff in the research department more than doubled between 1988 and 1996, not counting the integration of information services, which operated with one staff position in 1985 and one staff position in 2001. Expenditures on information, however, grew at a rate exceeding the growth in staff and inflation combined in the eight years between 1993 and 2001. The same shift in emphasis is occurring at major research libraries (Carson, 2001). The nonpersonnel costs of information for the AFT is approximated by a budget category called "subscriptions". This broad budget category includes magazines, newspapers, and journal subscriptions, but it also includes books and other printed materials, searchable databases, and purchased data, including economic forecasting data, directories, and e-mail or mailing lists.

After adjusting for the effects of inflation (measured by the consumer price index [CPI]), expenditures per staff member for subscriptions grew by nearly 50 percent over the eight years up to 2001 and became a larger share of the AFT budget. Subscriptions, however, still represent far less than one percent of all AFT expenditures.

Databases expenditures in the subscriptions component of the information services budget grew by approximately a factor of four between 1993 and 2001. As explained below, some of this growth represented a movement of expenditures from other parts of the AFT budget into information services. While still comprising about one-half of the information services budget, newspaper, magazine, and journal expenditures grew at about the same rate

as the growth in staff plus the rate of inflation. The price of print publications, however, escalated faster than the CPI.⁶ AFT staff clearly are less reliant on printed materials, probably choosing to use the free resources on the Internet or databases bought by the AFT. Without an increase in the information services staff, the increased burden of routing printed materials to a growing staff has been enabled by computer programs that log in new journals, magazines, and newspapers and generate customized routing lists.

Most of the growth in database expenditures in the information services budget is attributable to expanded use of Lexis-Nexis by AFT staff authorized to use the service. Information services recently played a key role in producing financial efficiencies while simultaneously expanding the utilization of a database. A number of AFT departments had individual transactional accounts with Lexis-Nexis. Furthermore, employees were not trained to search efficiently, thus adding to the cost of each search. To control costs, users moved to Internet-based accounts financed through a fixed-price contract in the information services budget with a small charge for each additional user. Staff were no longer tied to the software on a specific machine, which greatly improved access. Additional departments that needed but had never used Lexis-Nexis were subsequently added to the account. One reason for encouraging the wider use of Lexis-Nexis by staff themselves was to take some of the burden off staff in the information services area, who still provide search services for staff through specialized databases. Examples include:

- *Proquest Information and Learning*. Provides better graphics when other database services do not.
- *Factiva*. A product of the merger between Dow Jones Interactive and Reuter's Business Briefing, this is the only service that offers *Wall Street Journal* in full text.
- *OCLC First Search*. Offers some full text journal articles and library holdings useful for inter-library loans.
- *Ingenta*. Used to secure material on a quick turnaround basis by fax.

CONCLUSION

Powerful computers, improved data storage, inexpensive access to data, and the use of the Internet to distribute research led AFT to shift in the direction of using and producing information rather than focusing primarily on collecting and distributing research. Information services' role grew closer to the one occupied by researchers in the old paradigm. Reflecting general trends in information technology, the role of information services at the AFT shifted from collecting information to accessing information. Many traditional functions remain, however, such as the routing of print publications to staff. Furthermore, the more difficult-to-use electronic information is still used with the assistance of staff in information services.

Information services are playing an increasingly important role in improving coordination among departments to promote cost-efficiency and to expand the use of electronic information.

NOTES

1. For a brief pictorial history of the AFT see <http://www.aft.org/history/afthist/index.htm> (retrieved January 21, 2002).
2. New York joined with three locals from Chicago (one each for elementary, men's high school, and women's high school teachers) and locals from Gary, Oklahoma City, Scranton, and Washington, D.C., as charter members of the American Federation of Teachers (Brooks, 1967). The Washington, D.C., African-American teachers' union was the eighth local, but Oklahoma City and Chicago soon dropped out under school board threats to fire teachers belonging to the union.
3. Teachers in Butte, Montana, negotiated the first collective bargaining agreement for teachers in the 1930s. East St. Louis, Illinois, also preceded New York City, with a contract negotiated in the late 1950s.
4. Members belong to a local union, such as the Chicago Teachers Union, which affiliates with a state federation, such as the Illinois Federation of Teachers. In turn, the state federations are affiliated with AFT, the national organization.
5. For example, the National Charter School Finance Study is contracted to the American Federation of Teachers Educational Foundation, in conjunction with Policy Studies Associates, Inc., and Fox River Learning, L.L.C. The U.S. Department of Education funds the study. Its first report, *Venturesome Capital: State Charter School Financing Systems*, is posted on the U.S. Department of Education Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/chartfin/> (retrieved January 21, 2002).
6. For example, AFT's supplier of periodicals (Faxon) projected price increases of 8.9 to 10.4 percent in 2001 compared to an increase in the consumer price index of 2.5 percent.

REFERENCES

- Brooks, T. R. (1967). *Towards dignity: A brief history of the United Federation of Teachers*. New York: United Federation of Teachers.
- Carlson, S. (2001, November). The deserted library. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 16.
- Kassler, H. S. (2001). Data in the corporate universe: It's a dangerous world out there. *Searcher*, 9(3), 16-29.
- Nelson, F. H. (1990). *Labor relations in education in the United States*. Washington, D.C.: American Federation of Teachers. Retrieved January 21, 2001, from <http://www.aft.org/research/reports/collbarg/shankers.htm>.
- Nelson, F. H., Drown, R., & Gould, J. (2001). *Survey and analysis of teacher salary trends 2001*. Washington, D.C.: American Federation of Teachers. Retrieved January 21, 2001, from <http://www.aft.org/research/survey00/salarysurvey00.pdf>.
- Nelson, F. H., Rosen, M., & Powell, B. (1996). *Are teacher unions hurting American education? A state-by-state analysis of the impact of collective bargaining among teachers on student performance*. Milwaukee: The Institute for Wisconsin's Future. Retrieved January 21, 2001, from <http://www.aft.org/research/reports/collbarg/ifwf/ifwf.htm>.
- O'Connor, P. (1995). Grade school teachers become labor leaders: Margaret Haley, Florence Rood, and Mary Barker of the AFT. *Labor's Heritage*, 7(2). Retrieved January 21, 2001, from <http://www.aft.org/history/afthist/oconnor/oconnor/Index.htm>.
- Ojala, M. (1998). Information's fall from innocence. *Database*, 21(6), 8.

Librarians and Working Families: Bridging the Information Divide

GAYE WILLIAMS

ABSTRACT

ACCESS TO WEB SITES, E-MAIL, and other Internet technology is the biggest barrier that working people face to using the Internet as a vehicle to improve their lives.

Libraries, with their computers wired for the Internet and available for free public use, and with the valuable human resource they offer—librarians to help visitors find their way—bring technology into our communities in friendly and useful ways for workers who will not soon gain access to the Internet in their homes or on their jobs.

Through unions, working people can collaborate to make their communities better for everyone. With access to the Internet, working people can reach out to public officials, nonprofit organizations, and the public, working together to improve the quality of public services and health care provided to the community. Libraries have what many working families need to carry out this vision of access, leading to community action and improvement.

INTRODUCTION

When the planes crashed into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, working people around the country faced some immediate challenges: how to find out the toll that the tragedy would take on people at work in those buildings and their families, and how to quickly get help to the survivors and the victims' families.

More than 1,300 janitors, elevator operators, security guards, and public employees worked in the World Trade Center. Two window cleaners working outside on the 102nd floor of one of the towers were killed in the crash. Security guards and elevator operators were killed helping others escape

Gaye Williams, Assistant to the President for Communications and Technology, Service Employees International Union, 1313 L St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20005

LIBRARY TRENDS, Vol. 51, No. 1, Summer 2002, pp. 78–84

© 2002 The Board of Trustees, University of Illinois

to safety. In all, sixty-one members of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), along with many other working people, were killed when the World Trade Center towers were destroyed. More than 3,000 janitors and other workers lost their jobs and are expected to be displaced for a long period of time because their workplaces are gone. SEIU began efforts immediately to help the workers and their families survive the devastation.

While the news media replayed the crash footage and the burning buildings, working people were able to turn to the Internet for information and action. Through a network of Web sites called "Locals Online," SEIU was able to quickly coordinate a response to September 11 and bring assistance to the thousands of working families affected by the tragedy.

SEIU is North America's largest union, with 1.5 million members. SEIU is the largest health care employees union and the largest union of building service and security workers. More than 400,000 SEIU members provide public services as municipal, county, or state employees, or as providers of publicly funded services. SEIU has more than 250 local union affiliates and twenty-five state councils in the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico.

SEIU locals work to unite working families to improve our communities. By uniting health care workers, patients, families, and patient-care advocacy groups, working people in SEIU have been changing the way that hospitals, nursing homes, and home health care services are delivered, to give caregivers and the people they serve a voice in providing quality care and the public funding needed to guarantee access to health care for all. Religious groups, nonprofit organizations, and supporters across the nation have joined with SEIU's Justice for Janitors movement to win better pay, health care, and training programs that provide more good jobs and an improved standard of living for our communities.

In the aftermath of September 11, SEIU sprang into action to spread the word about the effects of the tragedy on workers and their families and to pull working families together to provide relief.

Using the innovative new Locals Online technology for creating Web sites, SEIU spread the word about victims and survivors and opened up a way for thousands to contribute to the union's relief effort for workers and their families affected by the disaster. Because we could distribute Web content through Locals Online, within just a few days after the tragedy dozens of SEIU local union Web sites in communities throughout the U.S. displayed messages about how Web site visitors could assist the relief effort. Local union Web site visitors could use our secure online contribution pages to donate money to SEIU's nonprofit relief fund. Over \$2 million were raised in the first few months, and messages of support and grief were sent by e-mail from users of Locals Online Web sites.

Using the Locals Online Web network to enable working families to share information about the tragedy and send money to the victims, the

survivors, and their families, as well as to tell stories of the worker-heroes who helped others survive, proved a concept that SEIU had set in motion just over a year before. New technology, such as Web sites and e-mail, can help link working families and unite them to take action, if they can get access to the technology.

HOW CAN LIBRARIES HELP?

Access to Web sites, e-mail, and other Internet technology is the biggest barrier that working people face to using the Internet as a vehicle to improve their lives.

Libraries, with their computers wired for the Internet and available free for public use, plus the valuable human resource they offer—librarians to help visitors find their way—bring technology into our communities in friendly and useful ways for workers who will not soon gain access to the Internet in their homes or on their jobs.

Through their unions, working people can work together to make their communities better for everyone. With access to the Internet, working people can reach out to public officials, to nonprofit organizations, and to the public they serve, and work together to improve the quality of the public services and health care provided to the community. Libraries have what many working families need to carry out this vision of access leading to community action and improvement.

Access

Since libraries are wired for the Internet, working people who do not have a computer at home or at work can use their neighborhood library to go online, set up a free e-mail account, and gain access to their local union Web site or any other Web site that meets their needs. Libraries can open the way to the Web by providing working people with the same access to Internet resources that others have.

Training

Librarians and other library professionals can help working people get more comfortable and skilled with using computers and surfing the World Wide Web.

Resources for Families

Many working people who are not sure what the Internet has to offer them do believe that their children need to know how to use computers and the Web to do well in school. Workers accustomed to seeing the library as a place for their kids to study can use it as a resource for their families to learn about and use computers.

Education

Libraries that offer adult education programs such as English as a Second Language, literacy classes, and classes to prepare for the high school

equivalency (GED) exam are an important resource that working people can use to get better jobs for themselves and their families.

All of these resources offer wonderful opportunities for unions and libraries to form partnerships for bridging the digital and information divide. Union leaders who are interested in having effective Web sites are potential partners with librarians who can help working people get online to use the Web, through access for those without computers, training, and encouragement to help them get over fears of using new technology.

Local union leaders who have been frustrated about how to reach workers who do not have access to e-mail and the Web at home or at work could spread information to workers on how to use their neighborhood library as a community technology center. The workers could go to the library, set up a free Web e-mail account, and use the local's Web site to get information on action needed from their coworkers and community organizations.

When working people and their allies in the community are online, local unions can overcome many of the problems of spreading news: distributing leaflets that volunteers can use to spark conversation and to encourage involvement in efforts to improve delivery of public services; keeping lists of activists' addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses up-to-date; and enabling workers to reach out to community groups who share their goals through those groups' Web sites and e-mail networks.

Working together, libraries and working people can fulfill the promise of using new technology for effective communications.

HOW CAN UNIONS HELP?

At SEIU, President Andrew L. Stern was determined that working families would not be left behind by the exploding information age. As SEIU's better-paid professional members buy computers and find their way online, they should be able to get information about their jobs and their union through the Internet. And the union should be able to help low-wage janitors, nursing-home workers, and school employees use the power of collective bargaining to bring computers, Internet service, and training on how to use these technologies into the homes of working people and their families. Collectively, working people should be able to bring the bright future promised by new technology into their homes and their families' lives.

To carry out this vision, SEIU launched a program to help working families bridge the digital divide—by increasing access to computers, Internet service, and training—and to bridge the information divide, by providing local unions with the content, training, and technology to make resources for working people available online.

Using Web sites and e-mail to bring together working families and the communities we serve has proven to be an effective way to win changes and improvements that make life better for everyone.

The SEIU Locals Online program helps working families communicate and bridge the information divide by providing every local union with the ability to create an effective Web site that is free and easy to maintain. With training and content produced by SEIU, every local can have their own space on the Locals Online Web network. The goal: to use new technology to communicate more effectively with members, workers who are trying to form unions, the news media, and our allies in the public.

WHAT IS LOCALS ONLINE?

Locals Online is a program that provides training and Web content to SEIU local unions. It is also a software system designed to make it easy for SEIU local union staff or volunteers to set up and maintain a Web site.

Through Locals Online, all SEIU affiliates have access to:

- Model materials and communication tips.
- Best practices on message development and Web design.
- A database of SEIU contracts.
- A comprehensive online action center.
- Tools to make Web pages available in languages other than English.
- News from around the union.

WHY LOCALS ONLINE?

Locals Online was designed to solve problems that local unions confront when they try to use new technology—problems that are common to any nonprofit organization wrestling with this new medium.

A key goal of the program is to put the local in control of their Web site. Most local unions—like most nonprofit organizations—do not have Web-savvy staff and rely on free-lancers or firms to set up and maintain their Web sites.

Locals Online makes it easy to set up and maintain a Web site, without requiring any technical expertise or skills in graphic design. Working on a Locals Online Web site is within the ability of any computer-literate staff person who can do word processing.

The Locals Online software system aggregates the cost of development and enables SEIU to provide all of these Internet tools and hosting at no cost to the local union.

With Locals Online, the local's staff can share the work. Web site administration responsibilities can be easily shared with or transferred to other staff members who also do not need prior experience in Web development technology.

Locals Online takes content produced by the International union and distributes or "syndicates" it to the local union Web sites through a database system. Through an online "content library," the Web site administrator can choose stock content to use as is or customize model content for the local union. Some content "streams," or shows up automatically, at designated parts

of the site without requiring any intervention or work by the local Web site administrator. The local can take advantage of content that is fresh, interactive, and action-oriented—important considerations for effective Internet communications.

Locals Online provides interactive Internet tools designed to help locals use Web sites to reach out for public support to win living wages, health care, and the public resources to provide quality services.

Visitors to Locals Online Web sites can take national political action such as sending fax letters to members of Congress without leaving their local site. Locals Online equips locals with tools to assist in communications during legislative and other campaigns.

The bulk e-mail tool allows the local to build an e-mail list of visitors to the site and manage a sophisticated message system that can sort users by the kind of information they request and send them e-mail accordingly.

LOCALS ONLINE IN ACTION

Since the program was launched in 2000, dozens of locals have set up Web sites using the Locals Online technology.

Our national action Web pages have brought local Web site visitors information on how to take action on issues such as defeating a 2001 economic stimulus package that would have helped wealthy individuals and big corporations at the expense of working families. The national online action center has enabled users to demonstrate their support for issues such as reforming immigration laws to reward hardworking, taxpaying immigrants for their contributions to our economy and to communities with a chance to stay in this country as legal residents.

Coordinated actions that members have taken to win public support for quality public services have been publicized using Locals Online Web sites. Workers have used their local Web sites to share information with their coworkers and allies in the community to build support for the changes and improvements to services that they are trying to make on the job.

Workers who are interested in joining the union can read messages from workers who do the same kind of work about how having a union has helped them make improvements on the job, solve problems, and have a voice with their employers in how care is provided at their workplace.

Locals have posted job openings and online forms that enable members to sign up to volunteer for political action work.

To see these examples and more in action, visit the Locals Online Web sites of the locals from which they were taken: <http://www.seiu250.org>, <http://www.seiu925.org>, and <http://www.seiu1199nw.org>.

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE FOR WORKING FAMILIES

SEIU locals have been helping to bridge the digital divide by increasing the access of working people and their families to new technology. Sim-

ply put, it will not do local unions much good to have state-of-the-art Web sites if working families are not online.

Many workers have gained access to new technology through the contract bargaining process. SEIU Local 32BJ in New York, Connecticut, and New Jersey broke ground in 2000 by becoming the first union ever to bargain computers, Internet service, and training with employers, by adding \$25 million to their training fund. Each of the 55,000 apartment doormen and other building service workers covered by the contract can get a new computer with Internet service and training on how to use it for only \$200. The employers are also providing training that will help workers use computers and e-mail as part of their jobs, offering improved service to apartment residents. Having so many workers online helped the local communicate with them after September 11 and involve them in providing relief to members who were victims of the World Trade Center disaster.

SEIU Local 99 in Los Angeles bargained with the Los Angeles Unified School District for computers, Internet service, and training for school employees, who can put down \$50 and pay back a \$500 no-interest loan through payroll deduction. SEIU District 1199 in Ohio bargained with the state of Ohio to provide low-interest loans to buy computers and Internet service for 4,600 state employees with the interest paid by the employer.

But many workers who cannot afford a computer and have not attempted to bargain these benefits with their employers could get online through the growing network of community technology centers that offer public access to the Internet for free.

SEIU is participating in a program funded by the U.S. Department of Education called the America Connects Consortium (<http://www.americaconnects.net>) as part of the union's effort to find ways to form partnerships to help working families bridge the digital and information divides.

Through our participation in America Connects and CTCnet, the Community Technology Center Network (<http://www.ctcnet.org>), we are exploring partnerships with community technology centers and SEIU locals and looking at how local unions with computer labs can plug into the resources provided by CTCnet.

Libraries, venerable public institutions that have been pioneers in providing access to new technology for everyone—really, the first community technology centers—have an important role to play in partnership with unions in helping working people and their families bridge the digital and information divide.

As unions find innovative ways to provide information and resources and ways to take action to improve our communities online, libraries and librarians can be valuable partners in increasing access to new technology, so that all working families can take advantage of the promise of the Internet and participate fully in this great information age.

Preserving the Historical Record of American Labor: Union-Library Archival Services Partnerships, Recent Trends, and Future Prospects

THOMAS JAMES CONNORS

ABSTRACT

THE ARCHIVAL RECORDS OF American labor institutions are a rich resource for the studies of American history, society, and culture. Not only can a researcher find evidence for the institutional history of unions by examining these records, but a whole array of other research topics come into play: strikes and their effects on communities and businesses, the effects of technology on employment and work processes, race and gender issues, and workers' culture, to name a few. This article briefly reviews endeavors by academic research institutions to capture and preserve this important historical resource, focusing on a recent project to assess the state of labor archives efforts and on the challenges facing union officials and labor archivists if a comprehensive documentation of American workers and their unions is to be achieved.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF LABOR ARCHIVES EFFORTS

Efforts to document the American labor movement by archivists, librarians, and scholars date back to the early part of the twentieth century with the work of Richard T. Ely and John R. Commons, founders of the "Wisconsin School" of labor history. Through the American Bureau of Industrial Research, and in cooperation with the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Ely and Commons gathered data from a wide range of sources for their classic studies of American industrial society and organized labor. That data ultimately became available to other researchers to examine and use.¹ Other data-gathering efforts followed Ely and Commons: the American Labor Year Book (begun in 1916) and labor-collecting by the Rand School for Social Science and the Tamiment Library. In the 1940s, the U.S. National Archives began to take an active interest in fostering the preservation of

labor union records, and the Labor-Management Documentation Center (now known as the Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation) at Cornell commenced its collecting activity. The establishment of this research facility represents the first instance of labor unions agreeing to work in partnership with an academic institution to preserve union records to support labor history.

Perhaps the signal event that launched a widespread effort to locate and collect American union records was the establishment of the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs at Wayne State University in Detroit. Founded in 1960 and housed in the Walter Reuther Library since 1975, the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs has collected and made available the records of national and international unions such as the United Auto Workers, the American Federation of Teachers, the Service Employees International Union, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, the Air Line Pilots Association, the United Farm Workers, and others. The Reuther Library also collects the records of labor-support organizations, state and regional labor councils, and the papers of labor activists. Wayne State's collecting efforts ushered in an era of vigorous union records-gathering activities by university special collections departments and state historical societies such as the Pennsylvania State University, the University of Connecticut, California State University at Northridge, the University of Texas at Arlington, the University of Maryland, Rutgers University, and the Ohio Historical Society. Georgia State University established the Southern Labor Archives in 1969, and in 1977 the Robert F. Wagner Archives at New York University was established.

Encouraged by the research needs of social and "new" labor historians, labor archives enjoyed a period of reasonable financial support and strong scholarly interest. But even as the George Meany Memorial Archives was being established by the AFL-CIO in 1980 and new regional efforts were taking shape at California State University at Northridge, San Francisco State University, the University of Massachusetts, and the University of Connecticut, the activism of the American labor archives effort seemed to peak. Labor archivists and other interested parties meeting at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies, Silver Spring, Maryland, in November 1980, assessed the situation and made several recommendations. Noting that repositories were unable to keep up the collecting pace of the 1960s and 1970s, that huge backlogs of unprocessed records had accumulated, and that the costs of processing had risen, they suggested that unions develop their own in-house archives, with the newly established AFL-CIO archives program offering consulting services in archives and records management. They also called for the establishment of a clearinghouse of information on the location and extent of holdings in the many repositories holding labor materials.

Through the 1980s and into the 1990s, steps were taken to implement these suggestions. *Labor History* published a special issue on labor archives in the U.S. in 1982 (which was updated and published in book form in 1992). The George Meany Center for Labor Studies has periodically offered a course in records management for local unions and has produced a records-management manual for distribution to local unions (Bernhardt, 1992). The Labor Archives Roundtable of the Society of American Archivists, composed of archivists from repositories with strong labor collections or agencies dealing in labor-related records, has sustained a discussion of labor archives issues since 1985. It was from the Labor Archives Roundtable that the Labor Archives Project, a recent effort to assess the work of labor archivists in the context of a changing labor movement, emerged. In 1997, the Labor Archives Project pulled together a large body of data relating to unions and organizational change, the current holdings of institutions that collect labor materials, and research trends.

THE LABOR ARCHIVES PROJECT, 1995–97: PROJECT OVERVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In 1995 a group of ten archivists responsible for union collections held by academic institutions commenced a discussion on what effect the changes in the American labor movement—in other words, the new AFL-CIO leadership, a spate of mergers, union institutional reorganizations, and increasing labor militancy and aggressive organizing campaigns—would have on the documentary record created by unions. This discussion led to research efforts into how unions were actually experiencing organizational changes, and how this was affecting established agreements between unions and repositories. In 1997, archivists representing five repositories holding substantial labor materials applied for and were awarded a Bentley Library Fellowship for the Study of Modern Archives Administration to assess the labor archives scene in light of the changing face of the American labor movement.²

In July 1997, Debra Bernhardt (Wagner Labor Archives, New York University), Les Hough (Walter Reuther Library, Wayne State University), Lee Sayrs (George Meany Memorial Archives), Julia Marks Young (Southern Labor Archives, Georgia State University), and the author gathered in Ann Arbor to review preassigned areas of research and to develop an action plan for American labor archives. The group summarized its findings as follows:

- A detailed organizational analysis of American trade unions, examining typical union structure, administrative functions and the extent of current organizational change, indicates that despite historical stability, many unions are entering a period of organizational transformation. The growing merger movement among AFL-CIO affiliates, the increas-

ing number of unions undergoing internal reorganization, and expanding efforts in organizing and community outreach will have serious consequences for union record-keeping practices and thus the records produced.

- Most unions engage in some form of records management. Approximately thirty of the seventy-eight AFL-CIO affiliates have in-house archives programs or agreements for archival services with outside repositories. The increased use of personal computers and the decline of central filing systems in union offices, as well as the overall fragility of records at the district and local levels, however, make it urgent that unions review and upgrade record keeping practices to ensure that crucial historical documentation from these organizational levels and entities is not lost.
- With national holdings of more than 130,000 linear feet, labor archives serve steadily increasing numbers of researchers. Students and academic faculty continue to be the most reliable users, with union administrative staff comprising a significantly growing user group. Unions are rightly proud of their rich cultural and historical legacies. Outreach programs by archives to unions will help guarantee that union culture and history are used to benefit their creators.

Based on the above findings, the following recommendations were derived:

Immediate Actions

- Disseminate LAP findings and recommendations to labor unionists, archivists, and historians through publications, presentations at professional meetings, and labor-sponsored regional meetings.
- Enlist the support of national unions to pass constitutional provisions requiring appropriate disposition of records of enduring value of active and inactive affiliated bodies.
- Encourage partnerships between labor organizations and interested repositories.
- Organize basic records management and archival training for union records keepers.
- Raise the archival consciousness of union officials about the disposition of historical and cultural materials when mergers and amalgamations occur.
- Update and reissue the directory of labor archives published in *Labor History* and the manual *How to Keep Union Records*.
- Establish a Labor Documentation Action Network, a national labor archives coordinating council to be convened at the George Meany Memorial Archives with the participation of unions, archivists, and user communities to begin to implement the long-term recommendations.

Long-Term Goals

- Conduct a systematic analysis of holdings and gaps in U.S. labor documentation.
- Bring under archival care significant historical records of the national unions, state labor federations, city central bodies, and significant locals that currently do not have archival partnerships.
- Explore enhanced electronic access to labor archives.
- Mount a pilot project to develop guidelines for the management of historically significant electronic records created by labor organizations.
- Establish a labor archives field program to foster cooperative efforts.

The LAP group's intention was to bring its findings and recommendations to as wide a body of constituents and interested parties as possible. The annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists became one venue for distribution, as did the Labor History Conference held annually at Wayne State University. The Project was also discussed at a gathering of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference in 1998. Key to moving to an implementation stage was obtaining a hearing from the leadership of the AFL-CIO to ask its support in moving ahead on building the network. A hearing proved difficult to obtain, however, and significant changes in the occupational status of several of the key LAP participants further delayed implementation of the recommendations.

LAP'S RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND COMPOSITE DATA SUMMARY

From the outset, the Labor Archives Project team realized its work would be more impressionistic/qualitative than scientific/quantitative. Although a more rigorous research methodology might have produced more thorough results, limited time and resources forced a fairly rough and ready approach. To gather information on the holdings, use, and organizational climate of unions, the team developed three questionnaires, two of which were applied to repositories maintaining significant labor holdings and one to unions. The repository respondents were:

Aldrich Public Library, Barre, Vermont

Butte-Silver Bow Public Archives, Butte, Montana

Catholic University of America, Department of Archives, Manuscripts
and Museum Collections

Cornell University, Theodore Kheel Center for Labor-Management
Documentation and Archives

Duke University, Perkins Library, Manuscripts Department

George Meany Memorial Archives, AFL-CIO

Georgia State University, Southern Labor Archives

Indiana State University, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections

Montana Historical Society, Helena, Montana

New York University, Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives

Pennsylvania State University, Historical Collections and Labor Archives

Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, Rhode Island

Rutgers University, Special Collections-Archives

Southwest Missouri State University, Ozark Labor Union Archives

State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Archives Division

Temple University, Urban Archives Center

University of Colorado, Western Historical Collections

University of Connecticut, Historical Manuscripts and Archives

University of Maryland, Historical Manuscripts and Archives

University of New Orleans, Archives and Special Collections Department

University of Pittsburgh, Archives of Industrial Society

University of Texas at Arlington, Texas Labor Archives

University of Washington, Northwest Regional Manuscripts Collection

University of West Virginia, West Virginia and Regional History

Collection

Wayne State University, Walter P. Reuther Library

(Note: Not all the above repositories responded fully to the two survey instruments provided.)

Appraisal, Selection, and Documentation Survey Form

1. Please report the quantity of labor records (union archives of affiliates, papers of labor activists, etc.) that your repository has accessioned in each of the ten preceding years: 1987 ____, 1988 ____, 1989 ____, 1990 ____, 1991 ____, 1992 ____, 1993 ____, 1994 ____, 1995 ____, 1996 ____.
2. Are there labor history collections you could not accession because you lacked resources? ____ yes ____ no If yes, please estimate how many collections/linear feet ____
3. Are you accessioning collections now that you would not have preserved 10 years ago? Why or why not?
4. Is your collecting mission solely labor or more broadly social history? Outline or attach mission statement.
5. Please indicate your collection's strengths in documenting the following labor history topics: (Strong, Adequate, Could be stronger)

Organizing

Political action

Labor disputes

Craft unionism

Radical unionism

Industrial unions
Public employees
Service workers
Labor insurgency
Rank and file documentation
Civil rights

6. What areas of the economy of your region have you (or other collections at your institution) documented?
7. What areas do you wish you could better document?
8. Do you serve as the repository for local or state central bodies? Please list.
9. Do you collect trade association records related to the industries for which you collect labor records? Please list.
10. What kinds of records do you routinely decline to take when you are in the field?
11. What is your practice regarding deaccessioning?
12. How large is your backlog?
13. To what level do you process?
14. By what means do you find resources to process large collections? Please send samples of donor agreements.
15. Have you established records management programs with the unions for which you serve as an historical repository?
16. What do you regard as the issue of greatest concern to labor archivists?
17. What joint projects might labor archivists undertake to strengthen our collections?

A second repository questionnaire was developed to solicit data on use of labor materials.

Labor Archives User Survey Form

1. Please indicate the number of linear feet of archival material relating to labor you hold in your repository.
2. Please indicate the number of staff employed in support of your labor collections.
3. The total number of research visits (1 day = 1 visit) utilizing your labor collections over each of the last 10 years has been: 1987 ____, 1988 ____, 1989 ____, 1990 ____, 1991 ____, 1992 ____, 1993 ____, 1994 ____, 1995 ____, 1996 ____.
4. Over the last decade, researchers have been seeking information on the following subjects (check those that apply):

Organizing
Political action
Labor disputes

Craft unionism
 Industrial unionism
 Radical unionism
 Public employees
 Service workers
 Labor insurgency
 Rank and file
 Civil rights
 Genealogy
 Other topics

5. The types of use of your labor records over the entire period has been (please rank in order of frequency—1 = most, 12 = least):

Administrative use by unions themselves
 Public relations use by unions themselves
 Attorney or other legal user
 Government official
 Projects by elementary or secondary school student
 Academic work by undergraduate or graduate student
 Scholarly work by historian or other humanities faculty member
 Research by labor studies, industrial relations or human resources professional
 Genealogist or family historian
 Media professional
 Other user

6. Over the last decade researchers have requested records of these types most frequently (please rank in order of frequency—1 = most, 17 = least):

Union charters, constitutions, by-laws and records concerning jurisdiction
 Minutes of meetings and conventions at all levels of organization
 Membership records
 Copies of contracts, minutes of collective bargaining meetings, grievance files, arbitration awards
 Correspondence relating to the records listed above and general correspondence
 Personal papers of labor officials and members
 Organizing and field service reports
 Annual and monthly financial reports, annual audits, account ledgers
 Official union publications
 Films and videotapes
 Photographic prints or negatives
 Posters, placards, badges, buttons etc.

All other financial records, including bills, canceled checks, bank statements, receipts and vouchers, work sheets, and pertinent resolutions

Ballots and other election records

Personnel and employment records including application forms and other records having to do with hiring, promotion, demotion, transfer, layoff, termination, rates of pay, and selection for training

Records used in making up the EEO-1, EEO-2, and EEO-3 reports

7. Please make any other suggestions you might have for the project team.

Sample findings from repository forms:

- Total labor archival holdings in linear feet (18 repositories reporting): 126,364
- Total collections in repositories (15 repositories reporting): 3,223
- Total number of labor archives full-time staff in U.S. repositories: 42.15

Records most frequently requested in ranking order:

- Correspondence
- Personal papers of labor officials
- Photographic prints and negatives
- Minutes
- Contracts, grievances, arbitration files
- Union publications
- Union charters, constitutions, by-laws
- Organizing and field reports
- Membership records
- Oral histories
- Films and videos
- Posters, badges, buttons
- Annual financial records, audits
- Personnel and employment records
- Ballots and election records
- Other financial records
- EEO reports

Types of users in ranking order:

- Graduate and undergraduate students
- Historians and humanities faculty
- Unions for administrative purposes
- Unions for public relations
- Community members

- Labor studies users
- Media professionals
- Rank and file
- Genealogists
- Elementary and secondary students
- Attorneys
- Government officials

Part of the Labor Archives Project involved an assessment of organizational structural and administrative functional changes in American labor unions and the implications of these changes for records-keeping and creation. To do this, two LAP team members compiled information from twelve unions based on personal meetings or telephone interviews with knowledgeable union officials. Supplemental organizational information was collected on another eight unions based on brochures and Web site visits.

Unions personally contacted were:

- American Postal Workers Union (APWU)
- Bakery, Confectionery, and Tobacco Workers Union (BCT)
- International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)
- International Chemical Workers Union
- International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craft Workers
- International Union of Electrical and Electronics Workers (IUE)
- International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE)
- National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC)
- Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
- United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners (UBC)
- United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW)
- United Steelworkers of America (USWA)

Supplemental information came from the following unions:

- United Auto Workers (UAW)
- International Association of Machinists (IAM)
- United Mineworkers of America (UMWA)
- Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU)
- American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Workers (AFSCME)
- American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
- Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU)
- Communication Workers of America (CWA)

Labor Organization Survey Form

Name of union

Address

Contact/Source

Title/Position

Telephone number

Office/Division checklist (Does your organization maintain the following organizational units at present?)

Office of the President

Office of the Secretary-Treasurer

Legal Counsel's Office

Organizing Department

Member Services Department

Community Services Department

Research Department

Legislative Department

Civil Rights Department

International Affairs Department

Publications Department

Information/Records Management/Archives

Public Affairs/Relations Office

Library

Finance and Accounting Office

Has there been significant organizational change in the past 10 years?

If so, from

- merger with another union or unions?
- merger of interorganizational units or departments?
- creation of new departments, offices or other units?
- disbanding of existing departments, offices or other units?

Please describe.

Records Keeping

Is there a central file system? Y N

Do offices/departments/units maintain their own files? Y N

Is there a records management program? Y N

Is there an archives program or partnership with an outside institution?
Y N

If partnership, with whom?

What is the percentage of records being created and maintained electronically?

10% 25% 50% more than 50%

Are there any disposition policies in place for electronic records?

If yes, please describe.

Have inactive records been microfilmed over the years? Y N

If yes, please describe (for example, ongoing, one time only, etc.)

In the course of our conversations with union contacts on the matters listed above we also discussed records creation issues, the existence and disposition of union cultural materials, and audiovisual records at the national, regional, and local levels. Narrative notes on these were appended to the survey form.

COMPOSITE DATA FEEDBACK

Organizational Structure

Based on the questionnaire and other information sources, the team found that the typical American labor union is structured as follows:

- Executive Board
- Office of the President
- Office of the Secretary-Treasurer
- Legal Counsel's Office
- Organizing Department
- Member Services Department
- Legislative Department
- Data Processing (Management Information Systems)
- Public Relations Department
- Library
- Publications Department
- Finance and Accounting Office or Department

Many unions also maintain the following alternate administrative units:

- Education Department
- Research Department
- Human Resources Department
- Civil Rights Department
- Records Management Office
- International Affairs Office
- Community Services Department
- Women's Affairs Department or Office
- Health and Safety Department
- Retired Members Office

In some cases a special office for Canadian affairs is maintained.

Significant Organizational Change

Of the twelve unions contacted directly, most reported some significant organizational change over the past decade. The Carpenters union, for example, (ca. 1997) was undergoing far-reaching restructuring. IUE, SEIU, UFCW, Steelworkers, Bricklayers, and Chemical Workers all reported mergers of some kind. BCT reported some mergers of locals and national office administrative units. NALC, APU, the Operating Engineers, and IBEW re-

ported no significant organizational changes during the ten years prior to the survey.

Records Management

Of the twelve unions contacted directly, six had some form of records-management system in place, six did not. Those with partial or full records-management programs were: NALC, IBEW, IUE, Steelworkers, SEIU, and UFCW. Those without were: APU, BCT, Chemical Workers, Operating Engineers, Carpenters, and the Bricklayers.

Archives Programs

Of the twelve unions contacted directly, seven reported partnerships with academic research facilities. These were: Carpenters and BCT (University of Maryland), IUE (Rutgers University), Steelworkers (Penn State University), UFCW (State Historical Society of Wisconsin), SEIU (Walter Reuther Library), and Chemical Workers (University of Akron). IBEW and APU reported maintaining a limited in-house archives programs.

Electronic Records

Circa 1997, the unions contacted maintained certain financial records in electronic form. All were interested in expanding electronic information technologies covering contract, arbitration, and membership data within their organizations. All of the unions contacted had made the move from central filing systems to decentralized filing motivated by the introduction of institution-wide personal computing.

A RESEARCH AGENDA FOR A NEW GENERATION OF LABOR ARCHIVISTS

Although an interesting and generally useful body of repository and union data was gathered during the Labor Archives Project, certain project weaknesses need to be addressed. The repository data-gathering instruments were the product of serious deliberation by LAP team members, yet the fact that respondents did not—and perhaps could not—respond fully suggests that the forms erred on the side of seeking too much information. However, the union survey form, since it was administered for the most part face-to-face, perhaps erred on the side of gathering not enough information. All qualitative research runs into the same problem: how much information is enough? Though the Bentley Historical Library supported the work of assessing and summarizing data gathered, the Labor Archives Project was a labor of love, conducted when the archivists involved could find time to focus on the basic research. While not throwing the baby out with the bath water, it must be admitted that what was learned through the LAP was cursory; the picture derived, fleeting.

The approaching centennial of Ely and Commons' work in documenting American workers and their unions is a good occasion to think about

revisiting the Labor Archives Project and updating its findings. Toward that end, I have compiled a research agenda and offer it to the labor archivists now moving into positions of influence in their repositories and encourage them to step forward to launch a Labor Archives Project II.

The Labor Archives Project did not closely examine the status of union-repository partnerships other than to note the number of unions with archival service agreements and the number of American repositories collecting labor materials. LAP II would present the opportunity to update these figures and examine the nature of standard archival services agreements and how or if they are being regularly enforced.³

Research Proposal

In the interests of data-gathering manageability and optimum response, focus on ten repositories based on either their regional or national standing as representatives of the current levels of labor-collecting. Good candidates would be:

1. Walter Reuther Library
2. Pennsylvania State University
3. San Francisco State University
4. New York University (Wagner Labor Archives)
5. University of Maryland
6. Georgia State University (Southern Labor Archives)
7. Cornell University
8. University of Massachusetts
9. University of Texas at Arlington
10. State Historical Society of Wisconsin

Contact curators or other spokespersons for these collections and ask the following questions:

- How many unions do you currently serve?
- How many cubic feet of union records have you acquired since 1997?
- What is the average number of researchers using union records you have served per year since 1997?

And, further:

- Will you share a copy of your standard deposit agreement/instrument gift with us?
- What do you select for transfer in terms of document types?
- How often do you communicate with your union contacts?
- Are you facing a backlog? Big, medium, or small?
- What is your rate of processing labor records?
- Are you satisfied with the terms of your agreements?
- Are there specific problem areas?
- Should your agreements be revisited with union officers and updated?

Contact union officers from a select group of AFL-CIO affiliates⁴ responsible for overseeing archives agreements and ask the following questions:

- Have there been any mergers in this union since 1997?
- Has there been any change of leadership since 1997?
- Has there been any significant reorganization since 1997?
- Has a records management program been instituted in this union?
- How frequently do you transfer records to your designated repository?
- To what extent are office transactions in your union conducted electronically?
- Has the repository made any recommendations for identifying electronic records of enduring value?
- Are audiovisual materials—training, organizing, legislative—included in materials scheduled for eventual transfer to the repository? Union memorabilia?
- Are you satisfied with your agreement?
- Should it be revisited and updated?

A report based on this research approach would present the data according to the following categories:

Repository Feedback

Summary of the kinds of agreements in force

Summary of selection criteria

Frequency of communications

Quantity of backlog and processing rates

Satisfaction quotient

Problem areas

Revisit agreement, yes or no?

Union Feedback

Summary of mergers, leadership change, reorganization findings

Records management program, yes or no?

Records transfer frequency

Summary of electronic records, AV, and memorabilia

Satisfaction quotient

Revisit agreement, yes or no?

CONCLUSION: THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

Labor unions retain an important role in American society as mediating institutions between deregulated corporate power and workers and their families. Though there are those who proclaim the irrelevance of the American labor movement in this era of global markets and the unhindered movement of capital, workers who enjoy the protections made possible by their union contracts see it differently. The content of the AFL-CIO's Web site and the sites of any of the major affiliates reflect both the domestic and

global concerns of the American labor movement in traditional terms of wages and working conditions and in terms of the full range of social amenities currently under attack by antiunion conservative forces intent on turning back the clock to the late nineteenth century. The need to ensure the preservation of the historical record of American labor unions is perhaps more important than ever. The current organizational dynamics of unions bespeak the urgency of the task facing labor archivists. Past efforts at establishing a coordinated approach to labor archives have succeeded only to a degree and the most crucial work remains to be done. The agenda set by the Labor Archives Project was ambitious, perhaps too ambitious, given the workaday realities facing labor archivists. But its honest and enthusiastic intent should not be demeaned or its results forgotten. With the proper preparation, a Labor Documentation Action Network⁵ could be established and sustained. Key ingredients to such an effort are understanding and support on the part of labor union officials and active commitment by labor archivists. What is needed to achieve the recommendations of the Labor Archives Project is a catalyst, a vehicle to bring the necessary players together. LAP II may be just that catalyst.

NOTES

1. For a more detailed history of the work of Ely and Commons, see Miller (1984). For a more detailed account of labor documentation in the U.S. to the mid-1980s, see Connors (1987).
2. From 1982 to 1997, the Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, offered residential fellowships to archivists to foster systematic research into areas of professional concern. The fellowships were supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Originally called the Labor Archives Appraisal Project, the project's name was shortened to reflect the fact that research efforts involved the whole range of archival endeavors, not simply archival appraisal.
3. It is unlikely that a team of five labor archivists such as came together in 1997 could be assembled again. The proposed research agenda is geared for undertaking by a single investigator or by a team of two investigators.
4. These should be representative of craft, industrial, and service union spheres.
5. Debra Bernhardt, late director of the Wagner Labor Archives/Tamiment Library at New York University, suggested this nomenclature to convey the need for an ongoing activist approach to labor documentation.

REFERENCES

- Bernhardt, D. (1992). *How to keep union records: A guide for local union officers and staff*. Silver Spring, MD: Labor's Heritage Press.
- Connors, T. (1987). The labor archivist and the "labor question": Two steps forward, one step back. *The Midwestern Archivist*, 12(2), 61-72.
- Miller, H. L. (1984). The American Bureau of Industrial Research and the origins of the "Wisconsin School" of labor history. *Labor History* 25(2), 165-188.

Simple Exhibits, Effective Learning: Presenting the United Farm Workers' Experience on the World Wide Web

DANIEL GOLODNER

ABSTRACT

THERE IS A RELATIVE DEARTH OF INFORMATION on the World Wide Web about labor unions and labor history. One notable exception is an online exhibit, entitled "La Causa—The History of the United Farm Workers," which was created by the Walter P. Reuther Library/Archives of Labor and Urban History. This article draws upon the experience of the Reuther Library in creating the UFW exhibit and asserts that an effective learning experience can be provided if the Web design is kept relatively simple, hypertext links are used, ease of navigation is emphasized, and other factors are taken into consideration. Creating a simple site will allow simple use and more users to visit.

SIMPLE EXHIBITS, EFFECTIVE LEARNING: PRESENTING THE UNITED FARM WORKERS' EXPERIENCE ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB

The widespread adoption of the Internet has led to several major developments that impact libraries, labor archives, and their patrons. First, the *amount* of accessible information has increased dramatically. People throughout the world now access comprehensive databases of archives, allowing them to peruse library holdings and other information sources. Even the language of our library institutions is now utilized in everyday Web sites. For example, newspaper Web sites store old information in their "archives"; reference papers or white papers are stored in online "libraries."

Second, the growth of the Internet has altered how information resources are accessed and by whom. Bibliographic databases and multimedia presentations (including audio and video streaming) are now on the

Daniel Golodner, Archivist, Wayne State University/Walter P. Reuther Library, 5401 Cass Ave., Detroit, MI 48202

LIBRARY TRENDS, Vol. 51, No. 1, Summer 2002, pp. 101–114

© 2002 The Board of Trustees, University of Illinois

Web and can be viewed by anyone with the requisite bandwidth or patience. We are truly in the midst of the information revolution. It has been stated by David Bowie that "[the Internet] thrives on its own chaos—[it] combine[s] things that shouldn't be bedfellows" (Nash, 1999, paragraph 7).

Third, the growth of the Internet is changing how we read and process information. The rapid expansion of the number of Web sites has led to information "overload" that dulls the senses. Young adults, who grew up with computers, have a different style of reading from that of older generations (who are not as conversant with computers). Younger readers tend to scan readings and to quickly locate hyperlinks, rather than to engage in more extended study. The youth of today "who would normally not read books with footnotes until secondary school, know their way around the bright blue hyperlinks. They learn early that a Web site isn't complete without references to other sites, and that the cooler the site, the cooler its links" (Bader, 2000, p. 16). Information processing, as a whole, has thus changed: "The result is that we know countless more 'bits' of information, both important and trivial, than our ancestors" (Birkerts, 1994, p. 72). As the repositories of knowledge, libraries and archives need to produce information to this new generation in a navigable and easy-to-read format.

The Web has exploded since the early 1990s, drastically altering demand for information. Newspapers no longer dictate how or in what form information is now read; instead, the public does. News can come to the front door, or be on your home computer and printed out before your coffee is ready, or be delivered at work via e-mail. Personal information portals gather content from various news agencies and are customized to include specific topics such as weather and sports. We want something more out of information, something that is fast and connected. With the public demanding instantaneous, customized information, how can pedagogy about history or other topics best be presented?

The Web provides a vehicle by which libraries can address this challenge. In particular, the Web provides a means by which information about one of the greatest social movements in United States history—the formation and maturation of labor unions—can be far more widely disseminated. Greater awareness of, and education about, labor history can thus be fostered.

At the same time, libraries and labor archives need to give careful consideration to the process by which they create online exhibits on the labor movement. For example, too great a reliance on the latest and most sophisticated applications on Web sites can actually impede effective learning. This paper draws upon the experience of the Walter P. Reuther Library/Archives of Labor and Urban History in creating an online exhibit on the United Farm Workers. The primary thesis is that effective learning and more widespread access stems from keeping the Web design relatively simple. Specific guidelines for creating online exhibits, culled from the Reuther Library's experience to date, are also provided.

BACKGROUND ON THE REUTHER LIBRARY

The Walter P. Reuther Library/Archives of Labor and Urban History is dedicated to preserving the historical record of the American labor movement in the twentieth century. It is named after the third president of the United Auto Workers (UAW), who was one of the most important figures in the twentieth-century labor movement. Reuther noted his concern for the housing and preservation of the UAW's records in a letter that he wrote to all the Local Union Presidents that stated, "it is only through careful documentation of our history that an accurate account can be given of the UAW in our nation's economic, political, and social life" (Reuther, 1962, [unpaginated]). With these words, the Walter P. Reuther Library has grown to be one of the largest repositories for the history of the American labor movement.

Presently, the Reuther Library houses the historical papers of ten national unions and over 1,700 other manuscript collections on the labor movement. The Reuther Library also preserves the historical records of Wayne State University as well as collections concerning the modern, urban history of Southeast Michigan. The library contains 300 transcribed oral histories, over 2 million photographs, and hundreds of feet of video and film.

The Reuther Library is dedicated to the belief that wide accessibility should be made available to all those interested in the collections housed at the library, whether patrons are academics or union members, high school students or graduate students. One way that the Reuther Library is making information available is by utilizing the medium of the Web in which information can be made available for everyone and can be delivered without restrictions that stem from reliance on new technology (i.e., plug-ins or heavy applications to use on the site).

As most organizations realize, it is impossible to stay on top of all of the latest technological changes on the Web. Thus, the Reuther Library decided to make a usable Web site that answers reference questions and delivers quality resource tools with simple navigation. By using the Web, the library embraces the new technology but keeps the physical aspect of human interaction and learning close at hand. The eclectic nature of the library's patrons (that is, an audience that potentially includes union members, undergraduates, graduate students, university professors, primary and secondary students, and school teachers) influenced many of the decisions regarding the design and content of information presented on the library's Web sites. As such, simplicity of presentation has been a constant theme at the Reuther Library.

The first Reuther Library Web site went up in 1996 and resembled most Web sites developed during that time period (e.g., flat, static sites that were more like electronic billboards than valuable resource tools). Collections were placed on the site in one long alphabetic list. The Society of Women Engineers had the only finding guide available to view. Information about

various departments of the Reuther Library and a short pictorial of the Flint Sit-Down strike were also available. At that time, the library thought that it initially just needed to establish a presence of labor and urban history on the Web.

Since 1996, the Reuther Library Web site has developed some wonderful resource tools that are not of the "wow-the-user" type but instead adhere to the most important principle of information service: to give patrons, in a timely and easy fashion, what they need. These resources range from a page that links to a majority of the labor archives and industrial relations schools in the U.S., to stories from the library's collections. There is also a reference area that helps users find information on large, prominent national unions such as the American Federation of Teachers and the Service Employee International Union. Recently, the library has added 300 finding aids, using basic HTML as well as Encoded Archival Description headers. The Reuther's Web site also has Web area portals dedicated to the library's major donating unions and organizations.¹

THE UNITED FARM WORKERS EXHIBIT

Exhibiting online has in recent years become a very powerful way of communicating to the user some very general principles of education and research, as demonstrated by the first major, online exhibit of the Reuther Library: "La Causa—The History of the United Farm Workers" (hereafter referred to as the UFW exhibit), which was established in conjunction with the physical exhibit by the same name.

The United Farm Workers of America (UFW) deposited their historical records with the Reuther Library in 1967. Though the union was relatively young, labor archivists at the Reuther Library realized the potential usefulness of these records. The union was viewed as a viable, strong entity that would have a major impact on agricultural business in the United States and on the lives of farm workers in America. There was a clear need to preserve the historical documentation of this union even in its infancy. Since 1967, the UFW collection has become one of the most popular collections among researchers using the Reuther Library. The immediate impetus for creating an exhibit as well as an online exhibit was a desire to commemorate the UFW's thirtieth anniversary.

The Reuther Library decided that this online exhibit (<http://www.reuther.wayne.edu/ufw.html>) would have more content and strength than previous exhibits posted on the library's Web site. The easiest way of accomplishing this was to incorporate more hyperlinks into the exhibit that would give an in-depth Web experience for the user. Hypertext is "non-sequential writing—text that branches and allows choices to the reader. As popularly conceived, this is a series of text chunks connected by links which offer the reader different pathways" (Landow, 1997, p. 35).² By hyperlinking, a virtual community of labor history can thus be encapsulated on the

Web. The UFW exhibit utilized what was already on the Reuther Library's Web site and also branched out to other areas of the Web in which relevant materials were available. The intent was that the library's UFW exhibit would become a focal point of research.

Despite the relative advantages of hyperlinks, a review of thirty-two library-related labor Web sites in 1998 and again in 2000 indicated that they were infrequently used. As of 1998, only three sites utilized hypertextual content for outside sources, and only four of the thirty-two sites featured online exhibits concerning labor history. A review in 2000 of forty labor-related Web sites indicated that ten had online exhibits, but there were still only three with hypertext links.

Moreover, most of the online exhibits merely reproduced material from a book or brochure. Online labor exhibits with hypertext, or with electronic bibliographic resources, do far more to educate the public. The benefits of a virtual exhibit utilizing the Web's various tools

will enhance scholars and learners who don't have good access to libraries; it will certainly be a boon to overseas scholars; it will enhance teaching by providing greater access to materials. But beyond the basic enhancements to access, the proliferation of electronically accessible primary materials will have an impact on the fields of culture and history no less profound than other technologies of accessible information, like the paperback book. (Bass, 1996, p. 16)

Hypertextual sites can create a virtual community, intellectually as well as aesthetically: "An imaginatively hyperlinked site should ideally have the beauty of a collage, or at least a gallery exhibit. Its references should resonate the way good literary allusions do—even more so because literary references speak to an elite readership, while cyber-allusions are for everybody" (Bader, 2000, p. 16).

Hyperlinking would give the labor community a larger presence on the Web for pedagogical and other purposes. There clearly is a dearth of Web sites regarding labor history (Summers, 1999, p. 79), as well as little information on the history of the working class. By utilizing the Web to its fullest potential, and thus providing a comprehensive array of material linked together in a long string of threads, librarians and labor archivists can help rectify the appalling lack of labor history on the Web.

CREATING THE UFW ONLINE EXHIBIT

An online exhibit on the Web can be created very quickly and without knowing all the ins and outs of the latest technology. A governing principle should be that a library's online exhibit is not a public relations device but is instead an educational tool. As such, the Web site should be interactive since, by developing hypertextual exhibits, we are lending our knowledge to one another and are not standing alone on the Web: "If we fail to understand the expressive environment of our time, we will have failed in

our duty as transmitters of culture" (Lanham, 1993, p. 100). An effective, online exhibit thus "exploits the hyperreal qualities of digital media and uses them to create a more compelling experience, rather than trying to mimic the structures that have evolved for use in the physical world. An effective exhibition views the limitations of the digital domain as opportunities rather than constraints" (Tinkler and Freedman, 1998, p. 2).

The basic principles of librarianship influenced the Reuther Library's Web committee's decisions in creating online exhibits. Individuals who work in information services provide patrons with the assistance they need to get the information they want. An online exhibit is a variation of this process, because it furnishes an array of information sources.

The Web committee embraced three goals in providing information to online patrons of its Web sites. First, the Web site should direct patrons to all relevant information sources, rather than being limited to the library's archival material. Second, ease of access was of paramount importance, irrespective of whether the patron was a first-time visitor or a frequent user. Navigation between information sources should be seamless and effortless. Third, the information provided online must be credible, in part because it reflects on the usefulness of the Reuther Library as an information source for research and education.

Also considered was a series of questions that Dr. Paul M. Helfrich wrote in his paper, "Building Onramps to the Information Highway," before creating an online exhibit.³ These questions help to define the Web site before it actually goes online as well as to keep the Webmaster or the Web committee focused on what needs to be done and what the final output will say to the visitor. Here are the questions the committee considered:

- Who is the intended audience? Is it a student, a teacher, a fellow archivist or librarian, a union member, a historian, a researcher, or someone simply surfing on the Web?
- How is the content shaped to address the needs and interests of these audiences? Is the content "pitched" at the appropriate level for elementary and secondary students, undergrads, graduate students, other academic researchers, rank and file labor union members, or all of the above? If there is an international audience, what provisions are made for multiple languages?
- What new collaborative potentials are there: labor archives to labor archives, archives to public libraries, archives to schools, archives to labor unions and/or to other organizations? (paraphrase of Helfrich, 1995, p. 3)

Collaboration is probably more important for online exhibits than for traditional, in-house exhibits, because the physical limitation of the latter allows one to create a niche (at least to some extent). On the Web, geography and physical limitations are nonexistent; one is catering to a much larg-

er potential audience. Collaboration, through a hypertextual relationship with another site or sites, is critical. In light of this, the Web committee did a preliminary online search to identify other historically related materials on the United Farm Workers. Keywords included "United Farm Workers," "UFW," and "Cesar Chavez." The first search (in 1997) found only a handful of sites, including one historical exhibit by the Cesar Chavez Institute of Public Policy at San Francisco State University (<http://www.sfsu.edu/~cecipp/>). The scarcity of sites suggested that the Reuther Library could thus make a substantial contribution to research by creating a Web site about the UFW.

Online information on the UFW has since expanded—a recent online search of Google, using "UFW history," produced fifty-nine citations. This shows that the labor presence, although a little late, is growing on the Web. With this growth the Reuther Library continues to update and revise the links on its UFW Web site so this site can remain an important point of research for the UFW on the Web.

After considering various initial guidelines regarding content, collaboration, and other issues, the Web committee then turned its attention to various design issues regarding its UFW Web site. A simple way to start the development of a Web site is to produce it on paper. The Web committee wrote, on index cards, topics that should be covered for the online exhibit. One card was made for the table of contents and another for the introduction; these two elements in the layout were particularly important. The table of contents should be a simple textual guide to the overall exhibit, containing the main subjects; it serves as a road map to the online UFW exhibit. This page was adapted for the textual navigation of the entire exhibit, allowing patrons to jump to the archival links wherever and whenever they liked. The UFW exhibit's main page allowed the users to get a short and precise overview of the UFW online exhibit, including primary materials and other resources. The introductory page contained no fancy graphics, and accessing it did not involve lengthy waiting for applications to download. A visit to the UFW online exhibit was viewed as analogous to an actual visit to the Reuther Library at Wayne State University; the intent was to make all visits pleasant, productive, and hassle-free.

Another design consideration regarding the UFW online exhibit was the order in which visitors viewed the information. The design was not linear, because the Web does not have the chronological order of a book. The UFW online exhibit was intended to be similar to a museum exhibit but much more. The patron was allowed to see the "next" picture but also to skip to the last picture. The UFW online exhibit also allowed patrons to skip over entire sections of the exhibit. Most importantly, the flow of the exhibit was such that, with one click of the mouse, the patron could go anywhere in the exhibit. Here is where ease of navigation comes in to play; the Web committee considered this to be the most important aspect of design of the Web site.

There are three navigation tools considered most popular for online exhibits (graphic, frame, and textual). The relative advantages and disadvantages of these approaches will be discussed in turn.

Graphic Navigation

Graphic navigation uses an image that, like a road sign, points someone in the right direction. An arrow pointing left, right, up, or down is, of course, the most commonly used graphical navigation tool and is a good way to navigate from page to page or up and down on a page. Other graphic navigation tools are graphic timetables, moving images, and icons. One consideration is the intended audience of the online exhibit: for example, icon graphics work well for children, but not for scholars.

Another consideration is that, unfortunately, a graphic is sometimes unstable in the download. If the download is not successful, the graphic will not load—thus leaving out the directions for the user. The user may refresh the page and try again but, more likely than not, the user will simply leave the Web site. Also, since an online exhibit has other pictures, the page could become very “busy-looking” to the user. If graphic navigation is used, the proper embedding of textual description should be used to ensure that, if the graphic fails, the user could still understand what must be done to move on in the exhibit. The audience of online exhibits produced by the Reuther Library is not asked to second-guess about where in the exhibit to go.

Frames

When the Reuther Library was creating the UFW exhibit in 1998, the library made a deliberate decision to avoid using frames. Aesthetically, frames were ugly and they were also causing havoc on the Web. The havoc was that browsers were not supporting frames, authoring had its problems, search engines had trouble finding frames, and users preferred to view regular versions rather than framed versions.

Today frames are completely integrated with the Web. They are one of the main navigation styles. Web designers are now creating seamless frames that do not break up Web pages into three or four different pages, and browsers are now supporting frames (somewhat). However, the Reuther Library still does not use frames for a navigation tool feeling that they are still too aesthetically unpleasing, and they can still be absolute nightmares if not done right.

One such nightmare occurs when a user bookmarks a Web site and the browser only bookmarks the parent frameset. The user might not want this frameset and is now stuck with useless information. Security can be an issue with frame-spoofing, which happens when a Web site inserts content into a frame that appears to be from another site. This can be hazardous especially if a Web site is handling e-commerce. One key reason for not using frames is that search engines still have problems with spiders finding the framesets, which causes search engines to rank the site poorly. Other

defects of frames to consider are that the interface design is very poor, accessibility is limited for users who are blind, and browsers, although supporting frames, do not support them in the same way. Those who consider using frames should understand that "while frames are not evil by default, there are many issues that must be considered before they are implemented on a site" (Roselli, 1999, pg. 1), and one of them is that frame design should be left to highly skilled Web designers.⁴

Textual Navigation

The Web committee decided that textual navigation was the best system for users, particularly in the environment of an online exhibit such as that on the UFW. Textual navigation is very easy to understand, relatively simple, and it does not force the user to guess or search in smaller screens. Some textual navigation guides can consist merely of simple messages, such as "Go Up" and "Next Page," throughout the exhibit.

Another very useful textual navigation device is a table of contents. Users still understand the look of a traditional table of contents. The table of contents can be placed in different areas (on the left- or right-hand margin of the screen or on the bottom or top); the UFW exhibit has the table of contents on the bottom of the page, stretching horizontally across. The rationale behind this design is that, after viewing the Web page, the user has already scrolled down and he or she can continue on without scrolling back up the site.

Another type of textual navigation consists of textual "breadcrumbs," which are increasingly popular on a majority of Web pages. Jakob Nielsen (1999) describes a breadcrumb as a "rail across the top of the page to situate the current page relative to its parent nodes and to allow users to jump up several levels in a single click" (p. 4). The UFW online exhibit uses the greater-than symbol (>) to indicate progression. Other Web sites use a colon or a slash to show the levels of hierarchy in the breadcrumb trail.

Consistency was another design issue considered by the Web committee when it prepared its UFW online exhibit. The Web is characterized by a lack of standards regarding uniformity in Web-page designs. The Reuther Library used the international standard for underlining links in blue. In fact, the UFW exhibit adhered to an explicit standard with respect to fonts, background color, navigation devices, color, text, and the types of graphics used. By maintaining a consistent look and feel in the entire Web site there is less possibility of an orphan site (a Web page that a Web browser finds after uplinking from a search engine, bypassing the homepage). Keeping some standard uniformity within a Web site allows the user to be able to readily identify the author of each page. The Reuther Library's reliance on uniform standards does not preclude the UFW Web site from being distinctive, if not unique—even if the site is not distinctive with respect to Web design (as many less-user friendly sites are), it is distinctive with respect to its substantive content.

After considering design issues, the Web committee addressed several other technical matters in creating the UFW exhibit. Before incorporating the graphics and the accompanying text in the Web site, the Web committee initially created an HTML, text-based document. This consisted of the overall framework of each page (e.g., navigation tools, page ownership signatures, and section titles). The Web committee also checked the links and navigation devices to ensure that they worked and that the flow was seamless. Library staff who had not been involved with the UFW project were asked to test the Web site for ease of use. The Web committee felt that eyes virginal to the project were needed to find defects in navigation and style that those who had been working on the site day and night might not notice.

In considering the amount of text to use for the UFW online exhibit, the Web committee concluded that "less" is definitely "more." The computer screen is markedly different from printed text, and the human eye is still getting used to viewing computer screens: "The printed page sits fixed and still; electronic text is always in flux, flickering on and off of our computer screen" (Fowler, 1994, p. 2). A patron of an exhibit in a museum or library only wants to read, on average, about 100 words of text at one time; for an online exhibit, the Web committee felt that an average of about fifty words per page would be sufficient for Web readers, who still scan and search for information at a quick rate of speed.

An online exhibit can be created in many forms, from the very dynamic to the simplest. Sites on the Web can be multisensory opportunities for Web surfers, or they can merely provide a story that needs to be told. Most Web development tools with fancy applications that were available when the UFW exhibit was first put on the Web required hours of hands-on learning and/or large expenditures on training. If the Web committee had adopted these tools to enhance the users' experience, a majority of the time they would not have worked with older operating systems and/or certain browsers. Much time would have been required for the Reuther's Webmaster to learn these applications, and the Web committee honestly felt that visitors to the site would not be able to fully appreciate a visit to the UFW exhibit if they were forced to wait for downloads and to download plug-ins.

Currently, these plug-in applications are either standard in bundled software or can be easily downloaded for free with less frustration than was the case when the UFW online exhibit was created four years ago. The trouble is that there is still a need for training in order for Web developers to implement these applications appropriately. Fancy applications, such as Flash from Macromedia, seem to encourage needless animation, which "makes bad design more likely, it breaks with the Web's fundamental interaction style, and it consumes resources that would be better spent enhancing a site's core value" (Nielsen, 2000, p. 1). By sticking to simple design and a simple HTML code, and by utilizing hypertext, an online exhibit can

be sufficiently hassle-free so as to encourage the user to come back to the original site without waiting for downloads. By keeping things simple, more online exhibits can be produced—and can be produced relatively quickly—for the Web. An increase in the number of online exhibits will, in turn, increase labor unions' (and labor history's) presence on the Web.

As with a physical exhibit in a library or museum, the rule of "quality over quantity" applies to the Web as well. A few images and text conveying a powerful and succinct message are more effective than throwing up on the Web everything available from labor archives. The Web also relies on speed, which is expedited by less code, graphics, and animation. The faster a page downloads, the more hits are likely to occur on a Web site: "Efficient communication relies not on how much can be said, but on how much can be left unsaid—and even unread—in the background. And a certain amount of fixity, both in material documents and in social conventions of interpretation, contributes a great deal to this sort of efficiency" (Brown and Duguid, 2000, p. 205). One must decide which photos best convey information. For the UFW exhibit, a maximum of only five to six graphics were used for each subject area.

The rule regarding the display of photographs on the Web is very simple: they should be no larger than seventy-two dots per inch. Graphics should be saved in a ".gif" or ".jpeg" format, which still remains the basic standard even after many years. Graphics can be displayed in numerous fashions. For the UFW online exhibit, the Web committee decided to utilize two styles that convey messages but that also allow for exploration. One style is a basic scan with full display; a click of the mouse produces a larger graphic in another window. The second style is a small section from the photograph (for example, just a face, or a handshake). Once the user clicks on the photo, a larger picture in another window opens, exposing a larger, uncropped photo. In the UFW exhibit, a mouse click of the "arms embraced" at <http://www.reuther.wayne.edu/exhibits/fw/gains.html> produces a larger, more comprehensive photo of Cesar Chavez and Candido Tacliben embracing. A mouse click on the photograph of a woman's face results in a photo of a mother looking at her child who is dying of cancer due to agricultural pesticides (<http://www.reuther.wayne.edu/exhibits/fw/pesticide.html>).

The purpose of an online exhibit is to extend the reach of collections housed in fixed locations to geographically distant areas of the world. Incorporating in an online exhibit the most memorable holdings of libraries and labor archives can only "provide exciting and enriching contextual perspectives that appeal to all levels of researcher" (Phelan and Beaulieu, 1999, p. 5). For example, the Reuther Library's physical exhibit on the UFW's historic boycott of grapes included, as a display, the cover of a cookbook published by the UFW. By way of contrast, the comparable online exhibit allowed the patron to actually peruse recipes in the cookbook (<http://www.reuther.wayne.edu/exhibits/fw/grape.html>). This approach

provides for interaction, just by using a simple link to another graphic rather than by using plug-ins.

The Reuther Library has adopted this stratagem for other online exhibits. For example, an exhibit on the Industrial Workers of the World (www.reuther.wayne.edu/exhibits/iww.html) mentions "Solidarity Forever," "Casey Jones," and "I Thought I Saw Joe Hill," with hyperlinks to a scanned image of the song sheets. An exhibit should have a hypertextual historical piece incorporated in the narrative of a story with the primary resource in a collection. By using what is available in the stacks and collections of libraries and labor archives, an online exhibit thus provides an in-depth, educational tool that also captures the patrons' attention.

As a final check, the Reuther Library typically has a group of coworkers go through the online Web site another time. Ease of navigation, the existence of dead links, the reproduction quality of images on the site, and download speed are some of the factors examined. Also, compatibility between Netscape, Explorer, and Opera Web browsers is examined. There are many subtle differences with each application, and the resultant impact can be quite large.

After the exhibit is up and running on the Web, the Web committee registers the main page of the exhibit with the providers of search engines, and otherwise attempts to encourage patron use of the site. Registering a site is like placing information in OCLC or MARC. All search engines have a small link somewhere on their front page that allows additions of new URLs, though repeated registrations (called "spamming the engine") are ill-advised, in part because they may result in search engines banning subsequent Web site placement.

Simple site names that accurately but succinctly describe the site's subject matter lead to an increased number of hits from casual users. The URL should include the title of each subject. In the Reuther Library's URLs for UFW online exhibits of pesticides contain pages concerning pesticide-induced cancer, the grape boycott, and child labor, respectively, that end with */pesticide.html*, */grape.html*, and */child.html*. The use of "meta tags" in Web sites also increases the probability of hits from search engines. Reliance on four or five subject headings in the meta tags, as well as variations on a word, is also recommended. For example, the Reuther Library's homepage uses "labor" and "labour"; the UFW exhibit includes meta tags in both Spanish and English. Simple site names and other design considerations discussed in this paper can help to attract patrons, but the substantive content of the online exhibit must also be sufficiently compelling to generate repeated viewings by students, academics, union members, and others.

CONCLUSION

The World Wide Web has changed dramatically since the UFW exhibit was placed online four years ago. Certain applications have become very

easy; new Web software is so easy that everyone can be a Web designer. Certainly the Reuther's Web committee never envisioned what the Web would look like today and possibly that is for the better. By keeping it simple and straightforward, there has been no reason to go back and change various plug-in applications or drastically change the design of the site. Any Web page is easy to use as long as there is straightforward navigation and clear-cut Web design. The trouble begins when fancy applications are used haphazardly or without proper thought as to the purpose and potential users of the site. By keeping a site very basic, one of the most important aspects of librarianship is accomplished: getting the information to the public in a sufficient and easy manner.

By creating simple online exhibits, libraries and labor archives can greatly expand knowledge and awareness regarding labor unions and labor history. The experience of the Walter P. Reuther Library in creating online exhibits about the United Farm Workers and other aspects of working-class history suggests that effective learning and increased patron usage can be enhanced most effectively by drawing upon the best internal and external sources of information. By linking to other institutions, a hub of information can be made available in a relatively simple way.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the Committee of Industrial Relations Librarians for allowing me to present this paper at the 1998 conference; Deborah Schmidle for believing in this issue and giving me kind advice and editorial direction; and Paige Brunner for her patience and understanding.

NOTES

1. Ten American unions have deposit agreements that state that the Walter P. Reuther Library is the official depository for their historical papers. Some of the unions financially support an archivist to care for their papers only. These unions are the Air Line Pilots, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, American Federation of Teachers, Association of Flight Attendants, Industrial Workers of the World, Service Employees International Union, The Newspaper Guild, United Automobile Workers, United Farm Workers Union, and the National Association of Letter Carriers. The Reuther Library also has deposit agreements with the Society of Women Engineers, Focus-Hope, and the American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan.
2. Jerome McGann also writes about the glories of hypertext in "The Rationale of Hypertext," retrieved January 24, 2002, from <http://www.village.virginia.edu/public/jjm2f/rationale.html>.
3. In addition to Helfrich's essay, another resource on museums and the Web that the committee used was Michael Douma, (2000), "Lessons learned from WebExhibits.org: Practical suggestions for good design," retrieved January 24, 2002, from <http://www.archimuse.com/mw2000/papers/douma/douma.html>.
4. For more information on frame issues, please refer to <http://www.webstandards.org>; Jakob Nielsen, (1996), <http://www.useit.com/alertbox/9612.html>; and the Web Design Group, <http://www.htmlhelp.com/design/frames/whatswrong.html>.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bader, J. L. (2000, July 16). Old media, meet new media, forget footnotes. Hyperlink. *New York Times*, sect. 4, pg. 16.

- Bass, R. (1996). Can American Studies find a whole in the net. Retrieved January 22, 2002, from <http://www.georgetown.edu/crossroads/guide/asins96.html>.
- Birkerts, S. (1994). *Gutenberg elegies: The fate of reading in an electronic age*. Boston: Faber and Faber.
- Brown, J. S., & Duguid, P. (2000). *Social life of information*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Fowler, R. M. (1994). What hypertext can teach us about the Bible with reflections on the ethical and political issues of the electronic frontier. Retrieved January 22, 2002, from <http://homepages.bw.edu/~rfowler/pubs/secondoral/hypertext.html#anchor60485>.
- Helfrich, P. M. (1995). Building on-ramps to the information superhighway: Designing, implementing, and using local museum infrastructure. Retrieved January 22, 2002, from <http://www.isoc.org/HMP/PAPER/085/archive/html950719/085c.htm>.
- Landow, G. P. (1997). *Hypertext 2.0: The convergence of contemporary critical theory and technology*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- Lanham, R. A. (1993). *The electronic word: Democracy, technology, and the arts*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Nash, K. (1999, January 4). Ch-ch-ch-changes: Interview with David Bowie. *Computer World*. Retrieved August 1, 2001, from http://www.computerworld.com/cwi/story/0,1199,NAV47_STO33387,00.html.
- Nielsen, J. (1999, November 14). When bad design elements become the standard. Retrieved January 20, 2002, from www.useit.com/alertbox/991114.html.
- Nielsen, J. (2000, October 29). Flash: 99% bad. Retrieved January 20, 2002, from www.useit.com/alertbox/20001029.html.
- Phelan, C., & Beaulieu, M. (1999). A model to support literary research collections on the World Wide Web. *Museums and the Web Conference, 1999*. Retrieved January 20, 2002, from <http://www.archimuse.com/mw99/papers/phelan/phelan.html>.
- Reuther, W. P. (1962, May 31). Letter to local union presidents. Walter P. Reuther Collection. Box 81, folder 11. Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs. Wayne State University.
- Roselli, A. (1999, July 27). Some caveats with using frames. *Evolt.org*. Retrieved January 23, 2002, from www.evolt.org/article/Some_Caveats_with_Using_Frames/22/293/index.html.
- Summers, J. H. (1999). The future of labor's past: American labor history on the World Wide Web. *Labor History*, 40(1), pp. 69-79.
- Tinkler, M., & Freedman, M. (1998). Online exhibitions: A philosophy of design and technological implementation. *Museums and the Web Conference, 1998*. Retrieved August 1, 2001, from http://www.archimuse.com/mw98/papers/tinkler/tinkler_paper.html.

Labor on Campus: Academic Library Service to Labor Groups

DEBORAH JOSEPH SCHMIDLE

ABSTRACT

THIS PAPER EXAMINES ACADEMIC LIBRARY SERVICE TO LABOR GROUPS, particularly in the area of Internet training. An informal survey of fifty-three academic libraries in schools with labor study programs throughout the United States and Canada indicates that while many libraries provide support for labor study programs within their schools, few provide direct programming to labor unions. The paper examines libraries that are providing service to union members and details the history of one such program, the Catherwood Library Labor Outreach Program at Cornell University.

INTRODUCTION

Academic references services are undergoing a dramatic transformation. In light of rapid changes in technology, including the proliferation of research material readily available online, libraries are grappling with the best means of providing information to clientele. Statistics collected by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) in the years 1995–2000 saw a significant drop in reference queries at a number of academic libraries (<http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/arl/index.html>). For example, at the Archibald S. Alexander Library, Rutgers University, reference statistics declined 21 percent during the academic year 1997–98 and 24 percent during the academic year 1998–99 (Wilson, 2002, p. 49). Though user numbers are falling, many libraries have expanded the boundaries of the traditional reference desk, offering digital reference services through the creation of online tutorials, digital reference resources, and e-mail services. While the growth of the Internet has resulted in new user patterns, it has also altered the potential client base for reference services. In particular, groups that have not been

traditional patrons of academic reference services—such as labor unions—now have a strong interest in information provision.

For example, the Internet is increasingly being recognized by organized labor as an important tool in its efforts to improve the terms and conditions of employment. Labor unions are successfully using this technology to enhance organizing campaigns by reaching larger audiences more effectively. In addition, organized labor's ability to access laws, regulations, judicial decisions, wage and market data, online news, corporate financial data, safety and health resources, and other information pertinent to union organizing, collective bargaining, and contract administration is contingent upon how well labor can marshal these disparate sources of information. As such, Internet training is a valuable investment for labor unions. This is also a very large group who need and/or could benefit from such training: labor unions in the United States have approximately 16.3 million members (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2002). Though labor organizations have education departments at the national and state levels, many local unions do not have adequate access to Internet training because of resource constraints.

Academic libraries, and in particular academic libraries associated with industrial relations programs, would seem like another "natural" source of such training. Over 100 colleges and universities in the United States and Canada offer a degree program or other structured study on industrial and labor relations. Academic labor studies programs are meeting some training needs, by, for example, providing noncredit extramural classes for labor union members through extension programs. University libraries, through library resource training, often support these classes. Several libraries have taken this concept a step further by offering training in online research to labor union members not affiliated with the university, often on an outreach basis. More libraries should consider such programs, which provide a positive benefit to labor unions and libraries; address the evolving need to reinvent reference services; and involve a "nontraditional" library patron group.

The approach used by the Catherwood Library Labor Outreach Program (Cornell University) to provide Internet training is one possible model and will be discussed at length. Initially, evidence regarding labor union's usage of (and need to use) the Internet will be presented. The results of a survey, conducted for this article, regarding academic libraries' involvement with training for union members, will also be discussed.

UNIONS AND THE INTERNET

When addressing the benefits to unions of the Internet, noted labor author Eric Lee quoted Karl Marx, who in *The Communist Manifesto* stated: "This union is helped on by the improved means of communication that are created by modern industry, and that place the workers of different locali-

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

TRENDS

“Library Trends has become the
premier thematic quarterly journal
in the field of American librarianship.”

Library Science Annual

h practicing librarians and educators use Library Trends as an
ntial tool in professional development and continuing
cation. They know Library Trends is the place to discover
etical applications, thorough analyses, and literature reviews for
ide range of trends. See for yourself the breadth of topics covered
his 37th volume.

rary Services to Youth: Preparing for the Future

mmer 1988) Edited by Linda Waddle

s issue focuses on changes taking place in the young adult age
up and forecasts how libraries can best serve this group.

king Art Objects and Art Information

l 1988) Edited by Deirdre Stam

s issue uses approaches from information science and art history
xamine the concerns of traditional art librarianship.

emporary Technology in Libraries

nter 1989) Edited by Beth Paskoff

s issue discusses contemporary technology in libraries and
gests possible future applications.

man Response to Library Automation

ring 1989) Edited by Janice J. Kirkland

s issue examines the trend toward greater automation in the
ary environment and the ways in which library administrators,
f, and users are affected.

scription Price \$50 (plus \$3 for overseas subscribers). Single
ies are available for \$15, including postage. Order from the
versity of Illinois Press, Journals Department, 54 E. Gregory
e, Champaign, IL 61820.

was reached that, among other things, ensured the reinstatement of all previously dismissed workers (Davis, 1998).

The Internet and Political Action

In the past few years, the use of the Internet as a tool of political action has also been evidenced in union Web sites. The AFL-CIO has a political Web site (<http://www.aflcio.org/labor2000/index.htm>) that includes online voter registration forms, links to congressional voting records, information on political issues impacting working families, and links to other political information Web sites. The Communication Workers of America's legislative Web site (<http://www.cwa-legis-pol.org/>) goes even further, by providing legislative fact sheets and e-mail links to Congressional representatives.

The Internet and Labor Research

In addition to using the Internet for communication, dissemination of information, and organizing, labor has also adopted the Internet as a research tool. Increasingly unionists are called upon to conduct a variety of labor research, involving the tracking of demographic, economic, legislative, wage and market, and safety and health data. While not all of this information is readily available online, the Web has become an inexpensive and convenient research tool for labor.

One example of the way in which labor uses the Internet for research can be found in the utilization of the Web to locate corporate information. Information such as company ownership, subsidiaries, investors, financial data, safety and health records, and past organizing history is often necessary for unions engaged in contract negotiations. Much of this information is now available online, through various company research sites, such as Hoovers.com, government agencies such as the Securities and Exchange Commission, the National Labor Relations Board, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, online newspapers, and individual company Web sites. As evidence of the importance of this information, the AFL-CIO and individual unions such as the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) now provide Web pages devoted to company research. The Food and Allied Services Trades Department (FAST) of the AFL-CIO has even developed their extensive *Manual of Corporate Investigations*, available to FAST members free of charge and for sale to all other union members for the price of \$25 (<http://www.fastaflcio.org/>). Despite the growing availability of such resources, many union members remain unaware of their existence.

LABOR'S NEEDS TODAY

Today, the issues that initially compelled unions to start using the Internet are as important as ever. While current figures for labor usage of the Internet are difficult to obtain, two recent surveys provide some evidence

as to how the labor community is utilizing this technology. Florida State University survey data collected during the summer and fall of 1997 from seventy-five U.S. national unions revealed that the reported benefits of using information technology included improved coordination with other unions (cited by 44 percent of union respondents), improved organizing (63 percent), and greater organizational efficiency (91 percent) (Fiorito & Bass, 2000, p. 7; see also Fiorito, Jarley, & Delaney, 2000; Fiorito, Jarley, Delaney, & Kolodinsky, 2000).

A Brooklyn College/Labor ONLINE survey in January 1999 of Web masters of unions throughout the United States (hereafter cited as the Brooklyn College survey) indicated that unions used the Internet to: provide a Web page for public information (59 percent of survey respondents), provide a Web page for member services and information (58 percent), garner e-mail membership (55 percent), and do corporate research for union campaigns (28 percent).¹

The survey respondents also estimated that 53 percent of union members had access to a computer on the job, 45 percent had access at home, and 48 percent had access at the union hall.

As well as utilizing the Internet for the needs noted above, unions are now taking a more active role in manipulating the technology itself. Most internationals and many locals now maintain Web sites. The Brooklyn College survey results indicated that the unions of 75 percent of the survey respondents maintained a Web site. Union members whose union had a Web site used the site to obtain information on: the union, generally (98 percent); union benefits (62 percent); organizing (38 percent); contract negotiations (23 percent); strike activity (11 percent); and "other," unspecified topics (38 percent).

Several sources provide more recent data on the extent to which unions are maintaining Web sites. A compilation of listings in the 2001 edition of the *Directory of U. S. Labor Organizations* revealed that all but 48 of the 162 unions in the directory included Web sites and/or e-mail addresses in their entries. Further examination of additional documentation found that five of these forty-eight unions had Web sites not listed in the directory.

This data only reflects the experience of state, national, and international unions in the United States and do not include the experience of locals throughout the United States or of unions in other countries. A recent NBER working paper estimated that there are over 2,700 union Web sites worldwide, though this figure is thought to be on the low side (Diamond & Freeman, 2001, p. 7). The authors of the NBER paper also cited U.S. Census data (the Current Population Survey Internet and Computer Use Supplement), which showed that 79.4 percent of union members used the Internet from home (Diamond & Freeman, 2001, p. 35). In addition to Web sites established by individual unions, there are a growing number of Web sites focusing on the needs of unions in general. Two

of the most comprehensive sites in the field include LabourStart (<http://www.labourstart.org>), offering daily international coverage of labor issues around the world (including countries such as Nigeria, Argentina, and Israel). The site also features the writings of Eric Lee, a world-renowned author on labor and technology.

Another notable Web site that discusses union issues is LaborNet (<http://www.labor.net.org/>), which was founded in 1991 to build a democratic communication network for the labor movement. LaborNet established the first regular labor news site in the United States and today, in partnership with the Association of Progressive Communication, has established LaborNets in Canada, the United Kingdom, Austria, Germany, and Korea. The site provides labor news, strike information, discussion forums, and other labor-related writings.

Other evidence of the unions' increasing use of the Internet includes the fact that over the past few years there have been several conferences concentrating on labor and technology, one of the most recent being the LaborTech Conference held on 7–9 December 2001 at the University of San Francisco. This conference attracted labor members, information technology specialists, and librarians who came together to discuss the use of technology in labor, as well as to offer practical workshops. Session topics included: How to Build a Labor Web Site, Democracy and the Internet, Using the Web and Information Technology (IT) for Research, and Using the Web and IT for Organizing. Among those presenting were librarians from UC Berkeley and the Holt Labor Library in San Francisco.

Further confirmation of labor's increased use and presence on the Web was evidenced in a proposal put forth in 2000 to create a top-level domain (TLD) name for unions. In July 2000, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) adopted a resolution calling for private-sector proposals for new TLDs ("Top Level," 2000, p. 880).²

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) in conjunction with thirteen other unions submitted a proposal to obtain a TLD designation for labor. The ICFTU, which was established in 1949, has 221 affiliated organizations (including the AFL-CIO) in 148 countries and territories on all five continents and a membership of 156 million (<http://www.ICFTU.org>). In its proposal to ICANN, the ICFTU submitted the request on behalf of thirteen international trade unions. The purpose of the TLD has been described as five-fold:

- a) To provide a strong and clear identity for workers' organizations on the Internet;
- b) To facilitate the efforts of employees to find and contact trade unions in their country, sector, or enterprise;
- c) To help Internet users identify bona fide trade union organizations as distinct from bogus unions such as government-sponsored labour fronts, and company-controlled unions;

- d) To form part of the ongoing international effort to bridge the "digital divide," by building meaning and utility into the Internet for workers, regardless of country, or economic status; and
- e) To facilitate employee and public access to a wide variety of union-sponsored services, including apprenticeship and training programmes, health and pension benefits, family and community services, etc.³

The proposal from ICFTU was ultimately denied when ICANN made the controversial decision that the international unions making the application "were not democratic." ICANN has since come under fire for the allegedly arbitrary way in which it assigns new, top-level domain names ("Net Can't Be," 2001, p. 8).

Labor is also taking a role in providing Internet Service Providers as well as Web browsers designed specifically for unions. LabourStart and Opera Software have cobranded a free, trade union Web browser, Opera (<http://www.opera.com>), which takes into account low-end users, yet downloads quickly; provides links to useful sites for labor union members; and works in multiple languages. The AFL-CIO has an Internet service (<http://www.workingfamilies.com>) that provides—for a nominal fee—unlimited Internet access, e-mail, 5 MB of Web space to build Web pages, and access to newsgroups covering a variety of topics.

In recognition of the increasingly important role the Internet is playing both in business and daily life, John Sweeny, president of the AFL-CIO, has taken measures to ensure that more unionists have access to computer technology, thereby overcoming the digital divide often experienced by underrepresented groups (AFL-CIO, 1999, p. 1).

In addition, several corporations now offer low-cost computers to their employees as part of their benefits package (Greengard, 2000, p. 18). This technology chasm, however, cannot be bridged by hardware alone. Training and the acquisition of Internet skills are imperative, given the numerous benefits of Internet usage for "nontraditional" library clients such as labor unions.

Various aspects of Internet training are discussed in the remainder of this paper.

LABOR IN A UNIVERSITY SETTING

According to *Peterson's Graduate Programs in the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences*, 35th edition, 2001, there are forty-six universities offering industrial and labor relations graduate degree programs throughout the United States and Canada. In addition, *Peterson's 4 Year Colleges*, 31st edition, 2001, lists seventy-one schools in either country with four-year degree programs in "Labor/Personnel Relations." Many of these schools offer extramural classes for union members—most of which consist of noncredit courses leading to a certificate of completion.

In light of how widespread these degree-conferring and extramural programs are, it would be natural to presume that the academic libraries affiliated with these programs would be involved, to some degree, with servicing the labor community. The available evidence of the extent of such involvement, among a variety of dimensions, will be presented next; it reveals a decidedly mixed record.

Several university libraries have won the John Sessions Memorial Award presented by the American Library Association's Reference and User Services Division (RUSA). This award, which was established in 1980, recognizes a library or library system that has made significant efforts to work with the labor community. A panel comprised of three to five RUSA members who have "demonstrated interest in or experience with library service to labor groups" judges submissions. A special plaque, supported by a donation from the AFL-CIO, is presented to recipients. Academic libraries that have won the award over the years include the Bobst Library at New York University, the University of Texas at Arlington, the Catherwood Library at Cornell University, Georgia State University, Ohio University, Wayne State University, Rutgers University, the University of California/Berkeley Institute of Industrial Relations Library, and Southwest Missouri University. A complete list of winners is available at http://www.ala.org/rusa/awards/awd_sessions.html.

Professional Committees

In addition, there are several professional committees created specifically for librarians who specialize in labor relations, including the Committee for Industrial Relations Librarians (CIRL); the AFL-CIO/ALA Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups, a division of the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA); and the Labor Issues Caucus of the Special Library Association. The AFL-CIO/ALA Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups (hereafter referred to as the joint committee), which was established in 1946 by the American Library Association Council, was initially formed to explore ways in which public libraries might develop services for labor groups. By 1974, the joint committee's charge had changed, as it now was to "initiate, develop, and foster. . . ways and means of effecting closer cooperation between librarians and labor organizations" (*ALA Handbook*, 2000, pp. 21–22). Presently, the committee membership consists of nine librarians from a mixture of libraries (including university, public, and specialized libraries) and nine representatives from the AFL-CIO. A librarian and labor official cochair the committee, which meets each year at the midwinter and annual ALA meetings and has a panel presentation at the latter.

In 1946—the same year the joint committee was established—directors from eight U.S., university-affiliated industrial relations centers convened to discuss how to enhance cooperation and collaboration between these centers. As an outgrowth of this meeting, the Committee of University In-

dustrial Relations Librarians (CUIRL) was formed the following year. Over the years, membership in this committee spread to include public, special, and government librarians; officials from the business and government sector; and interested parties in other countries. To better reflect the changed nature of its membership, the "university" portion of the committee title was dropped, and the committee was thus referred to as CIRL (Newsom-McGinnis, 2001).

Unlike the joint committee, membership in CIRL is open and flexible, and the organization has no affiliation with a library organization per se. CIRL meets yearly, in the United States and abroad, with meetings comprised of discussions and presentations focused on a central theme. The Special Library Association (SLA) Labor Issues Caucus was established in 1991 as an offshoot of CIRL. Many CIRL librarians were also members of SLA and after meeting informally at SLA for several years, a group of librarians decided to petition SLA for authorization to create a Labor Issues Caucus. Like the joint committee and CIRL, the caucus typically presents a program in conjunction with its annual business meeting. While the caucus has explored the possibility of formally affiliating with an SLA division as a roundtable or section and has also considered the possibility of merging with CIRL, it has decided to retain its present form for the foreseeable future (Newsom-McGinnis, 2001).

Direct Training to Unions: What Libraries are Doing

Participation on professional committees is one manifestation of university libraries' involvement with organized labor. Another form of involvement (at least, potentially) includes direct service provision through library-based training programs for union members. In light of the existence of over 100 colleges and universities with labor relations programs, unions' increasing use of the Internet, and the previously mentioned dearth of such Internet training on an in-house basis (particularly, at the union local level), one might assume that university libraries are addressing this training void. However, the existence of such library-labor Internet training collaborations has received little attention in the academic literature.

Because of the lack of data or other information about Internet training programs for unions that are offered by university libraries, this author conducted a survey to see whether reference librarians are actually providing such services. An informal, e-mail survey of fifty-three academic libraries throughout the United States and Canada (see Appendix) was conducted. This survey targeted schools with degree programs and/or institutes or centers in labor studies; to identify the relevant group to survey, a variety of resources were consulted, including *Peterson's Graduate Programs in the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences*, 35th ed., 2001; *Peterson's 4 Year Colleges*, 31st edition, 2001; and the following Web sites:

- Czarnecki's Labor Education Links, <http://users.erols.com/czarlab/index.html>,
- University of California at Berkeley Institute of Industrial Relations Library, <http://www.iir.berkeley.edu/library/laboredgd.html>,
- American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Labor Links, <http://www.afscme.org/otherlnk/weblnk04.htm>.

Nineteen of the fifty-three schools surveyed had noncredit certificate programs for labor union members.

The e-mail survey of fifty-three libraries connected to labor studies programs in the United States and Canada was conducted between October 2001 and January 2002. Librarians who were identified as being most likely to provide service to labor groups were queried as to the level of training support they provided (including Internet training) for union members in the university's extramural certificate program and/or for labor unions not involved with any certificate or other classroom program.

Responses were received from slightly under one-half (twenty-five) of the libraries contacted. Approximately one-third (36 percent) of respondents provide services related to either degree or certificate curricula, including bibliographic instruction, collection development, and interlibrary loan. The remaining two-thirds of respondents did not, for the most part, give a reason for the lack of their services to labor studies certificate programs. However, several of these schools indicated services had been offered in the past but were no longer available—at least one library cited lack of resources as a reason for not continuing this service (A. Perkins, personal communication, October 19, 2001). Several other respondents not currently offering services expressed a willingness to do so if asked.

At least two libraries surveyed are exploring distance education for labor unions.

Library materials from an annual training session (the Steelworkers Summer School at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign) are now being used in a new, Web-based distance learning course that is offered by the school's Labor Education Program (M. Chaplan, personal communication, February 5, 2001). At the University of Rhode Island, librarian Andree Rathenmacher is developing a series of information literacy modules on research skills needed for labor relations. The modules include assignments designed by Labor Research Center faculty as well as by the faculty librarian (A. Rathenmacher, personal communication, December 13, 2001).

A handful of libraries offer outreach services to labor union members who are not necessarily affiliated with a university certificate program. The University of Toronto's Centre for Industrial Relations Library has a subscription program in which labor union members pay an annual fee to access the library and its services. This program has been in existence for

more than twenty-five years; ten labor unions are currently subscribed and pay a fee of \$695 CND per year. The library also provides "current awareness services" (one highlights journals and another is a weekly e-mail news-alerting service called *Weekly Work Report*). While training is not routinely offered, Elizabeth Perry, a librarian at the center, has presented customized workshops on an ad hoc basis (E. Perry, personal communication, December 4, 2001).

Another library that has made a concerted effort to offer distinctive services to the labor community is the University of California at Berkeley's Institute of Industrial Relations (IIR) Library. Since 1989, Library Director Terry Huwe and Library Assistant Janice Kimball have presented a number of programs for labor groups. In August 2001 the library hired Lincoln Cushing as its new Electronic Outreach Librarian, further extending the library's ability to offer reference, training, and outreach to organized labor. The library works with a variety of unions, including the California Labor Federation, the AFL-CIO's statewide leadership body. Workshops usually are offered in response to the request of a specific union and are presented as packaged programs utilizing Power Point.

Cushing believes there is a need for additional training in labor unions. Berkeley's IIR library has taken the lead in providing such assistance, both at the rank and file and staff levels, viewing labor patronage as a natural extension of their service. While no formal budget for outreach exists at the library level, library outreach services are well-supported and all workshops are offered free of charge. Berkeley's IIR library also has a strong presence on the Internet with a continuously updated and comprehensive Web site that features full-text research reports, bibliographic and electronic guides, labor images, and other resources. The quality of this Web site was recognized nationally, as the IIR library won a John Sessions Memorial Award in 1998. At the time of the award, the IIR estimated receiving over 10,000 "hits" per week from users all over the world. Cushing, however, also believes that it is important to reach out beyond the Internet, and he envisions publishing a series of "how to do research articles" in labor-oriented publications (L. Cushing, personal communication, October 25, 2001).

THE CATHERWOOD MODEL

While training in specialized databases such as ABI/Inform and LEXIS/NEXIS is available through some labor extension programs, such databases pose two limitations to "nontraditional" groups such as labor unions: 1. they can be prohibitively expensive if unions want to acquire direct access, and 2. they may only be accessible to labor through universities or large public libraries.

Training needs and access issues influenced the design and implementation of the Catherwood Library Labor Outreach Program at Cornell

University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations (ILR School). For three years (1998–2001), the Labor Outreach Program offered Internet training programs to labor union members across the state of New York and in Washington, D.C.⁴ These workshops utilized free Web sites that could be accessed by anyone, anywhere.

The Catherwood Model: Background Information

The ILR School, which was founded in 1945 as a statutory college of Cornell University, is dedicated to the study and teaching of workplace issues. Areas of study include collective bargaining, labor history and law, labor economics, human resources, and organizational behavior. The ILR School's Martin P. Catherwood Library is one of the most comprehensive resources of its type in North America. Its collection of some 200,000 books, journals, pamphlets, and related materials supports education and research on nearly every aspect of the workplace.

The reference department of Catherwood Library has long been involved in training union members by working in partnership with the ILR School's Extension Division. The Division has six offices throughout New York State and offers a wide array of classes for both students and practitioners. ILR Extension Division faculty conduct workshops and seminars, teach credit and noncredit courses, offer on-site technical assistance and consulting, organize and manage forums for shared learning, and engage in research that is founded in actual work practices. In total, Extension Division faculty interact with over 500,000 people annually. Extension Division classes vary in length (typically, from one-day to one-week sessions), and ILR School reference librarians initially assisted by teaching one-to-two hour segments on using either the Internet or traditional, paper-bound library research resources.⁵ During the course of these training sessions, union members repeatedly told ILR School reference librarians that additional training on the Internet would be beneficial. That feedback provided the impetus for what eventually became the Catherwood Library Labor Outreach program.

The library's first workshops, which were designed by Catherwood Library reference librarians Deborah Joseph Schmidle and Suzanne Cohen, consisted of two full-day, hands-on sessions for union members in the central New York region. Unions attending included the Independent Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the United Auto Workers, the New York State Union of Teachers, the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees, the United Steel Workers of America, and the American Postal Workers Union.

The favorable response to these initial workshops resulted in a more formalized collaborative effort between the ILR School's library and the Extension Division. The Catherwood Library Labor Outreach Program was established in 1998, Deborah Joseph Schmidle was appointed to the newly created position of Outreach Services Librarian, and the Extension Division agreed to fund this position. Over the next two years, the Labor Out-

reach Program and the Extension Division worked together to provide expanded programming throughout New York State.⁶

Though the initial focus of the Labor Outreach Program was on providing introductory training, the program developed more extensive offerings as the computer literacy level of union members improved over time. Workshop presenters stayed current with the latest practitioner and research literature and with other developments regarding labor and the Internet. The curriculum of existing workshops was revised on an ongoing basis in order to address workshop participants' changing needs, to include topics of particular interest to each individual class, and to incorporate the latest developments in content and content delivery. In conjunction with the ILR Extension Division, the Catherwood Library Labor Outreach Program offered additional programs such as *Corporate Research*, *New Communication Technologies for Unions*, and *Designing Web Sites for Local Unions*. Training was provided in New York City and in upstate New York (Albany, Buffalo, and Rochester). In all, over thirty workshops were taught to more than 500 participants. Many workshops sold out and waiting lists for future sessions were common. In addition, a series of workshops were taught in Washington, D.C., at the U.S. Department of Labor library.

The Catherwood Model: Workshop Design

An Internet workshop for labor unions can be beneficial only if it addresses the specific needs and interests of union members. Before designing any workshops, the Labor Outreach Program solicited suggestions from labor unions concerning workshop content and other matters. A letter was mailed to local unions in the Central New York area outlining the Catherwood Library's plan for Internet training and requesting feedback on a number of items including program content, price, length (all day versus half-day), and location of potential workshops. The survey responses influenced the design of the initial workshops. For example, based on the comments received, a full-day workshop was planned. The workshop was designed to provide basic Internet information in the morning, followed by hands-on experience in a computer lab in the afternoon. The workshop agenda was along the following lines:

Morning Session

8:30–9:00	Registration
9:00–9:30	What Is the Internet? /Why Is It Important to Labor?
9:30–10:00	Tech Talk
10:00–10:45	Web Basics
10:45–11:00	Break
11:00–12:00	Search Engines Made Simple
12:00–1:00	Lunch

Afternoon Session

1:00–2:00	Labor Resources on the Web
2:00–3:00	Hands-on Guide to the Web
3:00–3:15	Break
3:15–4:15	Questions and Answers/Wrap Up

The morning session provided a very comprehensive and detailed introduction to the Internet and included such topics as the history of the Internet, an introduction to Web browsers, a technical section addressing how the Internet works, and a section on using search engines. The afternoon session was devoted to providing hands-on experience that highlighted Web sites listed in the eighty-page workshop manual developed by the Labor Outreach Services staff. Particular emphasis was placed on utilizing the Internet as a research tool for collective bargaining, as well as on how to evaluate—and not just access—Web sites.

In the afternoon session, workshop participants were first introduced to some basic starting points such as Web sites that link to other labor sites. This introduction was followed with presentations on general topics (i.e., government information, statistics, and corporate research) and on specific issues (i.e., how to obtain cost-of-living data or contractual clauses in collective bargaining agreements). Sufficient time was also provided for workshop participants to freely investigate the Internet on their own. Search engine exercises written by the ILR reference librarians were available for those who wanted some formal structure to follow during this period, but participants were also encouraged to search online for information that interested them and to ask questions about these areas of interest. During this part of the workshop, both workshop instructors circulated around the computer lab to offer assistance.

At the end of the day, participants were given a workshop evaluation to complete before they left. Evaluation questions included the content of the program, the usefulness of information learned, the ability of the presenters, and suggestions for improving the workshop. The evaluation responses were tabulated, given to Catherwood Library and Extension Division administrators, and used to revise subsequent workshops.

One challenge in designing a workshop of this type was how to ensure that the level of information regarding the Internet was neither too simplistic nor too complex. In order to determine the level of computer literacy among registered participants prior to the actual workshop, a short questionnaire was drafted and included in the registration brochures. Participants were queried as to whether they owned a computer, had access to the Internet at home and/or the work site, and used e-mail. Participants were also asked to provide a self-rating as to the level of their computer skills and were asked to describe themselves as: beginner, intermediate, or advanced computer users.

This self-assessment proved to be the most problematic part of the survey, in part because many computer users who identified themselves as being at the intermediate level actually appeared, during the course of the workshop, to be beginners. On the other hand, many users who rated themselves as beginners were often quite advanced in their computer ability. As such, this question became a loose marker at best, and the issue of evaluating competency levels prior to workshops was subject to ongoing assessment.⁷

The short questionnaire also asked workshop registrants to list the three most important questions or concerns they had about the Internet. These questions helped "customize" the workshops in order to address the special concerns of participants in any particular workshop session. The union affiliation of registrants was also taken into consideration in order to further tailor the workshop to the needs and interests of the participants. All of these activities were undertaken in an effort to make the workshops of relevance and of immediate, practical use to participants. Admittedly, there is a "core set" of skills and information that needed to be presented in any Internet training session; however, "individualizing" the workshops helped to engage the interest of participants and furthered their learning experience.

The Catherwood Library Labor Outreach Program also concluded that, for full-day workshops, it was beneficial for both the participants and the trainers if more than one instructor was present in the classroom. The Labor Outreach Program thus used two reference librarians, who shared teaching responsibilities for workshops. While one librarian presented the training material, the other moved around the room to assist participants when needed.

Learning was also facilitated by the distribution to all workshop participants of *Labor Unions and the Internet*, an eighty-page manual written by the Labor Outreach Program. The manual consisted in large part of an extensive, annotated listing of Web sites, with detailed descriptions of each site. This material was categorized by subject areas of potential interest to labor unions. Among the topics covered were: collective bargaining (wages, benefits, cost of living, labor market); arbitration; labor and employment law; international labor; organizing; safety and health; strikes; government sites; statistical sites; company information; union directories; and labor studies and labor libraries. The manual also included a checklist on how to evaluate Web sites, a glossary of Internet terms, and technical information.

The Labor Outreach Program also ensured that the manual remained current and was readily accessible: it was updated quarterly and posted on the Catherwood Library Labor Outreach Program Web site. This Web site provided additional online training materials, as well as information on workshops.

During the latter part of its existence, the Labor Outreach Program was gravitating toward providing tutorials online and was exploring other aspects of distance learning, in addition to continuing to present workshops.

One lesson learned from the first set of workshops was the importance of keeping information practical and to the point. Initial evaluations by workshop participants indicated a lack of interest in a comprehensive history of the Internet or in other basic, background information about the Internet. Information in and about Web sites that was of immediate use to workshop participants was regarded as beneficial; less-applied information (such as an overview of the Internet itself) received less favorable ratings.

This feedback led to a redesigned workshop program, in which some of the basic information regarded as superfluous by workshop participants was dropped, and more time was allocated to discussion of additional Web sites and to hands-on activities. In the revamped program, the basic introduction lasted only one-half hour and was followed by a presentation of specific Web sites on a subject-by-subject basis. The "free" period was retained; during this time, workshop participants could search and explore the Internet for research topics of particular interest to them. Informal quizzes, which were written by the Labor Outreach Program and revised for each workshop, were also used. These exercises allowed participants to evaluate Web sites and were also intended to increase learning retention.

The Catherwood Model: Marketing and Promotion

Curriculum design was not the only consideration when the Labor Outreach Program was created. Another obvious factor was identifying possible participants for the *Unions and the Internet* workshops.

A brochure was drafted that included an outline of the workshop; registration information; a preworkshop needs-assessment questionnaire for registrants; information on the workshop presenters; and an overview of the Labor Outreach Program. Catherwood Library hired a graphic designer to produce a final version of the brochure.

The brochure was first sent to a mailing list provided by an ILR School Extension Division instructor with extensive union contacts and subsequently distributed to those on the ILR School's mailing lists. Information on the Labor Outreach Program was also provided by announcements sent to labor Web sites and listservs; ILR School alumni association material; postings on the Catherwood Library Web site; and word-of-mouth from prior workshop participants. In 2001, a revised brochure was designed with the aim of marketing the program via mass mailings.

An important component in marketing, promoting, and otherwise identifying potential audiences for the Labor Outreach Program's training was the development of partnerships. Building strong partnerships was vital for several reasons. Working with other parties allowed costs to be shared. Since the Labor Outreach Program workshops were often "on the road," there was a constant need to find suitable computer laboratory space. In New York City, the program established a partnership with the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE). This allowed the

Labor Outreach Program to use computer facilities at a reduced rate. In exchange, the library presented, free of charge, an Internet training program for UNITE members in March of 1999.⁸

Partnerships also resulted in reaching new audiences. Over the years, the Catherwood Library developed a working relationship with the U.S. Department of Labor library in Washington, D.C. As part of the latter's open house celebration in October 1999, Catherwood Library's Labor Outreach Program presented three *Labor Unions and the Internet* workshops. By taking part in this open house, the library strengthened its ongoing relationship with the Department of Labor, reached new union member audiences, and fostered potential new partnerships with unions having national headquarters in the District of Columbia.

The Catherwood Model: Financing and Cost Recovery

In addition to program content and publicity, the Catherwood Library Labor Outreach Program also had to consider fiscal issues. The program operated as a nonprofit venture, and thus attempted to keep workshop costs to a minimum. The Catherwood Library Outreach Services Librarian was a reference librarian, but the ILR School's Extension Division funded this position.

While the program operated as a nonprofit venture, it still needed to cover its expenses. These expenses included direct training costs (such as renting the computer lab; food and refreshments for workshop participants; printing the eighty-page workshop manual; and lodging, meals, and other travel expenses of the workshop instructors); publicizing the program; and other overhead costs. By forming partnerships with other organizations and institutions, the Catherwood Library Labor Outreach Program was often able to share workshop expenses, and thus keep registration fees relatively low for workshop participants.

The Catherwood Model: A Program in Abeyance

Despite its demonstrable success in the three years of its existence, the Catherwood Library Labor Outreach Program was suspended in the fall of 2001. In July 2001, the Labor Outreach Program's Outreach Services Librarian left Cornell University. The search for a replacement was still underway when the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center occurred. The resultant fiscal impact on the budget of the ILR School's Extension Division, which funded the Outreach Services Librarian position, resulted in a decision to temporarily suspend the Catherwood Library Labor Outreach Program.

At the time of its suspension, the program was on the verge of partnering with e-Cornell (a distance learning unit of Cornell University) to provide distance learning opportunities to unionists. Both the ILR School and Catherwood Library are dedicated to providing outreach services to union members; as such, the Labor Outreach Services program was temporarily suspended rather than eliminated.⁹

CONCLUSION

Increasingly, labor unions are utilizing the Internet to communicate among members; disseminate information to members and the general public; conduct more effective union organizing campaigns, strikes, and other union activities; and conduct research on myriad topics. While approximately 100 universities offer classes on industrial and labor relations, most libraries connected to these programs have done little to address the training needs of labor.¹⁰ There are a variety of possible reasons for this tepid response, including the fact that union members may be a "nontraditional" patron group not directly affiliated with—and thus not serviced by—academic libraries. Library staff and funding constraints may also have precluded more active involvement by library reference departments in this area, though several libraries have also expressed a willingness to train union members if asked.

However, the statistical data that indicates a drop in reference queries at many academic reference desks does give one pause. Through its involvement with both the John Sessions Memorial Award and the ALA/AFL-CIO Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups, organized labor has acknowledged the importance of libraries to labor and demonstrated a willingness to partner with library groups to provide union members with the library services they need. Libraries would be well served by responding to labor in equal fashion through a proactive approach to meeting the needs of this constituency. The partnership between libraries and labor can be a mutually beneficial one, as exemplified by the following quotation of Elizabeth Perry of the Centre for Industrial Relations, University of Toronto: "We feel that outreach to the unions is invaluable for our library as it makes it much easier for us to obtain union documents for our collection, as well as makes us aware of the concerns and issues of unionists. For our Centre as a whole, the ongoing contact with the unions opens informal doors for our students when/if they choose the labour movement as a career path" (E. Perry, personal communication, December 4, 2001).

The Catherwood Library Labor Outreach Program has been one of the few examples in which such library-labor partnerships were actually undertaken. The approach used by the Program differed from that undertaken by many academic institutions whose classes for union members are held in academic settings and typically have not emphasized the Internet directly. Catherwood's Labor Outreach Program workshops focused exclusively on Internet training, were taught in off-campus settings at locations most convenient for union members in different parts of New York State, and evolved over time to reflect the changing needs of unions and the specific interests of individual unions. Catherwood Library reference librarians and workshop participants (union members) learned from one another, and it is hoped that the knowledge thus gained enhanced the work of everyone and fostered the development of additional partnerships with groups that up to this point had been relative strangers.

APPENDIX: LIBRARIES SURVEYED

Athabasca University, Alberta, Canada
Brock University, St. Catherine's, Ontario, Canada
Capilano College, North Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
City College of San Francisco, San Francisco, California
Community College of Baltimore County, Baltimore, Maryland
Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti
Evergreen State College, Olympia, Washington
Florida International University, Miami
Florida State University, Tallahassee
Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts
Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana
Indiana University, Indiana, Pennsylvania
Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge
McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
Michigan State University, East Lansing
Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro
New York University, New York City
North Arizona University, Flagstaff
Pennsylvania State University, University Park
Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey
Queens College, City University of New York, Flushing
Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey
San Francisco State University, San Francisco, California
San Jose State University, San Jose, California
Simon Fraser, Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada
University of Alabama, Birmingham
University of Arkansas, Little Rock
University of California at Berkeley
University of California at Los Angeles
University of Connecticut, Storrs
University of Hawaii, West O'ahu, Pearl City
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
University of Iowa, Iowa City
University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky
University of Maine, Orono
University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
University of Massachusetts, Boston
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
University of Minnesota, Minneapolis
University of Missouri, Columbia

University of Nebraska, Omaha
 University of North Texas, Denton
 University of Oregon, Eugene
 University of Rhode Island, Kingston
 University of Tennessee, Knoxville
 University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
 University of Washington, Seattle
 University of Wisconsin, Madison
 Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond
 Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan
 West Virginia University, Morgantown

NOTES

1. "Labor ONLINE Conference Internet Usage Survey Results," as published on http://www.laboronline.org/survey/survey_webmaster_results.stm. This document states (at page 1): "As part of its first international conference held in New York City in January of 1999, Labor ONLINE surveyed Webmasters [of an unspecified number] of unions across the country to determine the ways in which Internet technology is being used by unions. The statistics listed below are the results of the survey." The latter sentence contained the following endnote: "Survey designed by Professor Manny Ness, Brooklyn College, City University [of] New York, and Nick Unger, UNITE. Statistical analysis provided by Assistant Professor Manual Tirado, Brooklyn College, City University of New York."
2. ICANN is a nonprofit corporation that was formed to assume responsibility for the IP address space allocation, protocol parameter assignment, domain name system management, and root server system management functions previously performed under U.S. government contract by Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) and other entities (<http://www.icann.org/>).
3. Communication from Duncan Pruett, Information and Information Technology Coordinator, ICFTU to tld-interest@icann.org, July 13, 2000.
4. Though the primary focus of the program was on labor unions in New York State, union members from other jurisdictions also attended the workshops.
5. Catherwood Library assistance was limited, at this point, to Extension Division classes offered on the Cornell campus.
6. In addition to funding the Outreach Services Librarian position, the Extension Division handled the administration of the workshops, including registration and—initially—publicity. Labor Outreach staff developed the curriculum and taught the actual workshops. Donna Schulman, Director of the Lenz Library at the ILR Extension Metropolitan Office in New York City, collaborated with the Outreach Services Librarian to teach workshops in New York City.
7. The discrepancies between the self-assessments and the actual level of computer skills also meant that workshop content, both prior to and during the workshop, had to address an array of computer competencies. It was not possible to provide, in a very short survey, common baseline measures that workshop registrants could use in rating themselves.
8. Though it established partnerships, the Labor Outreach Program retained sole control over curriculum design and all other components of the training. None of its partners ever sought to exert influence over these matters.
9. Though it is no longer updated as often or as thoroughly, the *Labor Unions and the Internet* manual is still posted on the Catherwood Library Web site at http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/library/reference/guides/show_guide/default.html?guide_number=111.
10. It should be pointed out that librarians associated with these programs do support the degree programs and, to a lesser extent, noncredit programs. In this instance, labor refers to the labor community at large.

REFERENCES

- AFL-CIO. (1999, October 11). AFL-CIO partners with iBelong, Inc. to "wire working families" to the Internet. [press release]. Retrieved January 30, 2002, from <http://www.aflcio.org/publ/press1999/pr1011.htm>.
- ALA *Handbook of Organization, 2000-2001*. (2000). Chicago: American Library Association.
- ALA Reference and User Services Association Sessions Award Winners. (2000). Retrieved January 29, 2002, from http://www.ala.org/rusa/awards/awd_sessions.html.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2002). Union members summary. Retrieved January 31, 2002, from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.nr0.htm>.
- Davis, S. *www.dispute.net. People Management* (September 17, 1998), 53.
- Diamond, W., and Freeman, R. (2001). Will Unionism Prosper in Cyber-space? The Promises of the Internet for Employee Organization. NBER Working Paper Series. Working Paper 8483, p. 35.
- Fiorito, J., & Bass, W. (2000). *Information technology use in national unions: An exploration*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University.
- Fiorito, J., Jarley, P., & Delaney, J. T. (2000). The adoption of information technology by U.S. national unions. *Relations Industrielles-Industrial Relations*, 55(3), 451-475.
- Fiorito, J., Jarley, P., Delaney, J. T., & Kolodinsky, R. W. (2000). Unions and information technology: From Luddites to cyberunions? *Labor Studies Journal*, 24(4), 3-34.
- Greengard, S. (2000). The great PC giveaway. *Workforce*, 79(8), 18-20.
- Lee, E. (1997). *The labour movement and the Internet: The new internationalism*. London: Pluto Press.
- Net can't be just for in-crowd. (2001, February 16). *Los Angeles Times*, p. 8. Retrieved January 31, 2002, from Lexis/Nexis database: <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/universe>.
- Newsom-McGinnis, B. (2001). *Labor issues caucus: Early roots*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Top level Internet domain for unions could be considered by Web regulators. (2000, August 3). *Labor Relations Week*, 14(31), 880.
- Toppo, G. (2000, September 5). Labor unions seek to organize through cyberspace. *Bangor Daily News*, p. 5.
- University of Virginia Library/Association of Research Libraries: ARL Statistics. (2001). Retrieved September 2, 2002, from <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/arl/index.html>.
- Virtual Organizing Facilities Bookstore Unionization, *Bulletin to Management* 48, (December 4, 1997), 386.
- Wilson, M. (2002). Evolution or entropy? The changing reference culture and the future of reference librarians. In Lankes, R. D., Collins, J. W., & Kasowitz, A. S. (Eds.), *Digital reference service in the new millennium: Planning, management, and evaluation* (pp. 47-57). New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers.

About the Contributors

BERNADETTE BAILEY is the Librarian at the American Federation of Teachers. She has worked at the AFT since 1989 and holds a M.L.S. from Catholic University.

MARGARET A. CHAPLAN is an Associate Professor and the Labor and Industrial Relations Librarian at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. She was guest editor for an issue of *Library Trends* on "Employee Organizations and Collective Bargaining in Libraries," and is the author of "The Secondary Literature on the National Labor Relations Board: a Bibliographic Essay," a chapter in *The National Labor Relations Board: a Guide to Research* (in press).

THOMAS JAMES CONNORS is Curator of the National Public Broadcasting Archives, University of Maryland, College Park. From 1982–87 he was assistant archivist at the George Meany Memorial Archives, AFL-CIO. In the ensuing years he has been involved in various labor oral history and archives projects. He is the author of two articles on labor archives issues. In 1997 he led the Labor Archives Project, a coordinated research effort by a group of labor archivists to assess the status of labor archives in the United States. The Labor Archives Project was supported by the Bentley Historical Library Research Fellowship Program for the Study of Modern Archives.

DANIEL GOLODNER is the American Federation of Teachers Archivist and Webmaster at the Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs at Wayne State University. He has a B.A. in History from Virginia Commonwealth University and a M.L.S., with a concentration in archives, from Wayne State University. He has given lectures and workshops as well as presented papers and written on a wide array of topics including records management,

labor history, and Web development in archives. He also teaches a course on the History of U.S. Social Movements at Wayne State University for the Labor Studies program.

EDWARD J. HERTENSTEIN is an Assistant Professor of Labor and Industrial Relations, assigned to the Labor Education Program at the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. He teaches Labor on the Internet to union members across the state of Illinois, and his research focuses on blue-collar use of the Internet. He received a B.S. in Labor Studies from Indiana University, and an A.M. and Ph.D. from the University of Illinois.

ELIZABETH ANN HUBBARD is a Senior Associate at the American Federation of Teachers in Washington, D.C., where she researches and writes about issues in higher education. She has a Ph.D. and a M.L.S. from the University of Pittsburgh and a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Maryland. Dr. Hubbard has more than fifteen years experience in academic and medical libraries and five years experience in public libraries. In her previous positions, she has been a public school teacher, the Director of Planning and Development at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, the Director of the Medical Resource Center at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute, a Manager of Staff Development at the University of Maryland, and a researcher at the Library of Congress. She is presently a member of the AFL-CIO/ALA Joint Committee on Library Services to Labor Groups.

ARTHUR S. MEYERS has been the Director of Russell Library, the public library in Middletown, Connecticut, since 1997. His recent writings include, "A Lot in Common": The League of Women Voters and Public Libraries" (2000), published in *Public Libraries*; "Building a Partnership: Library Service to Labor" (1999), in *American Libraries*; and several articles on ethnicity and the Open Forum lecture movement. He has served as President, ALA Reference and Adult Services Division (now RUSA), and is a Contributing Reviewer with *Reference Books Bulletin*. His ALA awards include the John A. Sessions Memorial Award for library service to labor.

F. HOWARD NELSON is the Senior Associate Director of the AFT Research Department for the American Federation of Teachers and holds a master's degree in Economics and a Ph.D. in Educational Policy. He prepares the annual fifty-state salary survey of the AFT. Among other responsibilities, he specializes in analyzing budgets, international education data, teacher salary surveys, vouchers, charter schools, and analyzing private contracting in public schools. Dr. Nelson has published over three dozen articles and book chapters.

DEBORAH JOSEPH SCHMIDLE is History and Information Science Bibliographer and Reference Librarian at the Dewey Graduate Library, University at Albany, as well as an adjunct faculty member in the School of Information Science and Policy at the University at Albany. Prior to this position she spent more than four years at Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations as an Outreach Services Librarian. She holds a B.S. in History from Binghamton University and a M.L.S. from Syracuse University. As Outreach Services Librarian, she designed and taught Internet research training workshops for labor union members human resource professionals in various cities throughout the northeast.

She is cochair of the ALA/AFL-CIO Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups, president-elect of the Upstate New York Chapter of the Special Libraries Association, government relations chair of the Eastern New York Association of College and Research Libraries, and a member of the Policy Information Network of New York State.

Presentations and publications include, "Empowerment Online: Creating an Internet Training Program for Labor Unions" (1999), delivered at the 52nd annual conference of the Committee of Industrial Relations Librarians, International Labour Organisation, Geneva, Switzerland; "Labor Unions and the Internet" (1999), published in *Economic Notes*; "Resources for Labor History Month" (2000), coauthored with Ann Sparanese and published in *Booklist*; and "Designing and Delivering Internet Instruction to Labor Unions: A Practical Guide" (2002) in *The CyberUnion Handbook: Transforming Labor Through Computer Technology*, edited by Arthur B. Shostak.

ANN C. SPARANESE is the Head of Adult and Young Adult Services at Englewood (New Jersey) Public Library, where she manages a busy reference department. She received her B.A. in English at the State University of New York at Buffalo and her M.L.S. at Rutgers University. She served two terms on the AFL-CIO/ALA Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups and chaired the ALA's John A. Sessions Memorial Award Committee. Sparanese has written on libraries and labor studies for the library press and publishes a "Selected Bibliography for a Public Library Labor Studies Collection" on her library's Web site: <http://www.EnglewoodLibrary.org/newsres.html>. She is also a steward in her union, RWDSU Local 108, AFL-CIO, and a vice president of the Bergen County (New Jersey) Central Trades and Labor Council.

GAYE WILLIAMS is the Assistant to the President for Communications and Technology at SEIU, the Service Employees International Union. She directs SEIU's Communications and Technology and Campaign Communications Departments. With 1.5 million members, SEIU is the largest union in North America, representing workers in health care, building service, and public service.

Need a new perspective?

Perspectives on Work

**Always informative with something new
and different in each issue!**

Perspectives on Work



Perspectives on Work is a premier publication in the field of industrial relations and human resources. *Perspectives* is aimed at engaging practitioners, policy makers and researchers in analysis and discussion of how to update workplace practices, institutions and policies to fit today's economy and workforce needs. It seeks to publish thought-provoking articles and columns that encourage creative and forward thinking about the future of work and the policies and institutions that should govern employment relationships.

Issues cover specific topics of interest to professionals and academics, such as work in the twenty-first century, work and family, international perspectives, social contracts, and ensuring human rights in employment.

Perspectives on Work is the official publication of the Industrial Relations Research Association (www.irra.uiuc.edu).

Issued: June and December

Subscription rate: institutions: \$170.00 (\$185.00 non-U.S.)*;
individuals: \$19.00; (\$34.00 non-U.S.) **for *Perspectives* only;**
\$85.00 (\$100.00 non-U.S.)*

(*Includes membership in the Industrial Relations Research Association and subscriptions to other society publications. See website at: www.irra.uiuc.edu for a complete list and details)

UNIVERSITY OF

ILLINOIS

PRESS

(866) 244-0626

www.press.uillinois.edu

INDEXING AND ABSTRACTING IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

2nd edition

By F. W. Lancaster

SECOND EDITION FEATURES

MULTIMEDIA SOURCES AND THE INTERNET

Award-winning author F.W. Lancaster has revised his widely used text to address growing complexities in the field. Featured in the second edition of *Indexing and Abstracting in Theory and Practice*:

- New multimedia sources chapter
- New indexing within the Internet chapter
- Updated chapters on text searching, automatic processing methods, and the future of indexing and abstracting
- Nine updated chapters on basic principles and theories
- Modified practical exercises

In addition to use as a text, *Indexing and Abstracting in Theory and Practice* holds value for managers of information services and others concerned with indexing, abstracting, and all related issues of content analysis.

**The Publications Office
Graduate School of
Library and Information Science
University of Illinois**

501 East Daniel
Champaign, IL 61820
(217) 333-1359
(217) 244-7329 fax
puboff@alexia.lis.uiuc.edu

Orders must be prepaid to
The University of Illinois
Major credit cards and checks
accepted

ISBN 0-87845-102-1

**426 pages
cloth**

\$47.50 plus shipping

LIBRARY TRENDS

"*Library Trends* has become the premier thematic quarterly journal in the field of American Librarianship."

Library Science Annual

Both practicing librarians and educators use *Library Trends* as an essential tool in professional development and continuing education. They know *Library Trends* is the place to discover practical applications, thorough analyses, and literature reviews for a wide range of trends. See for yourself the breadth of topics covered in forthcoming issues.

- **TEACHING AND ASSESSING INFORMATION SKILLS**
(Fall 2002) Edited by Hannelore Rader
- **ECONOMICS OF LIBRARIES**
(Winter 2003) Edited by Lewis-Guodo Liu and Bryce Allen
- **RESEARCH NEEDS**
(Spring 2003) Edited by Mary Jo Lynch
- **SPECIAL COLLECTIONS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**
(Summer 2003) Edited by Barbara Jones

Institutional subscription price \$94 (plus \$7 for international subscribers). Individual subscription price \$66 (plus \$7 for international subscribers). Student subscription price is \$28 (plus \$7 for international subscribers). Single copies are available for \$25.00, including postage. Order from the University of Illinois Press, Journals Department, 1325 S. Oak St., Champaign, IL 61820-6903, Telephone 866-244-0626, Mastercard, Visa, American Express, and Discover accepted.



0024-2594(200222)51:1;1-Z